March/April 2006 ISSUE

Alternative CENTRAL

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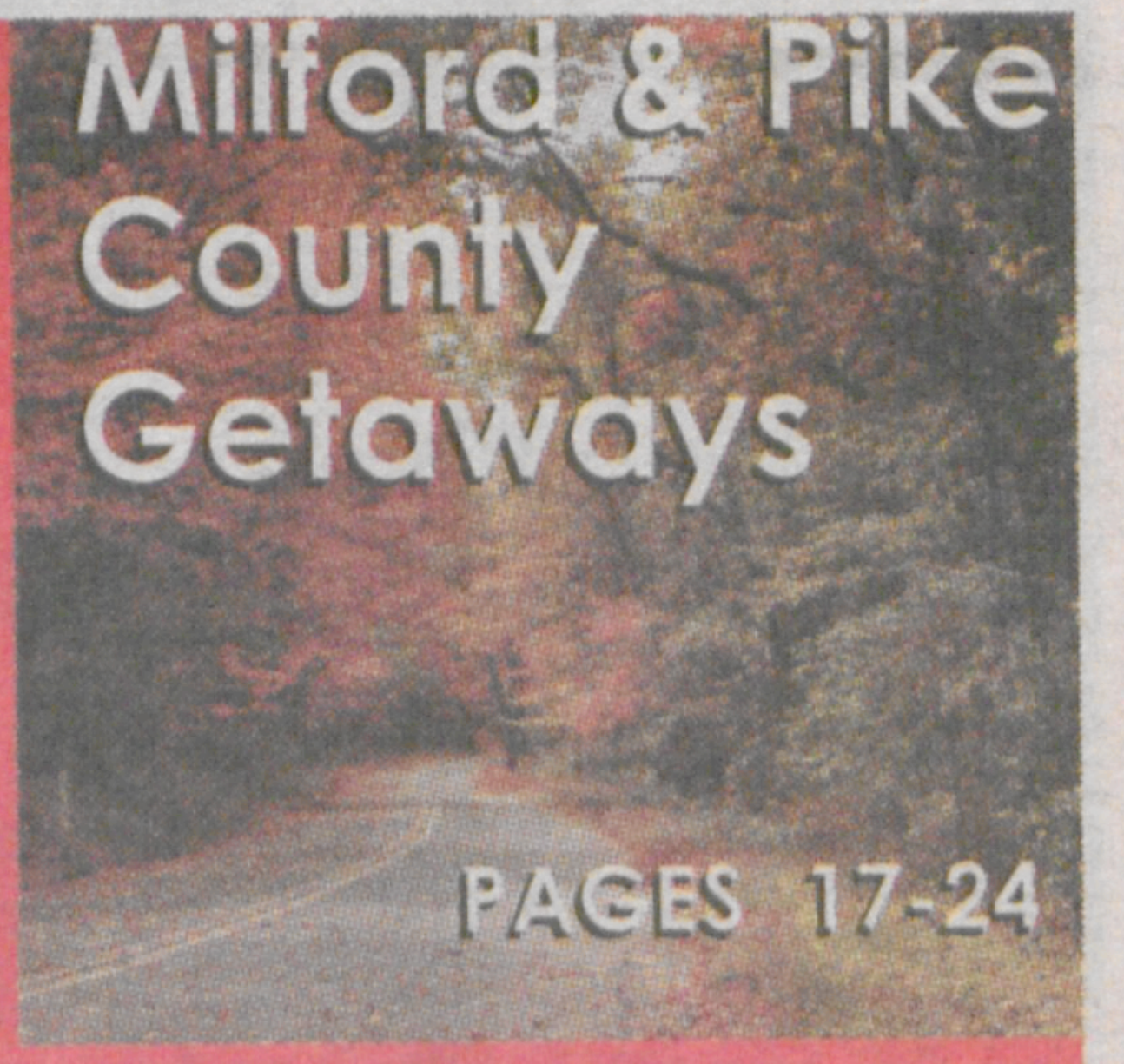

Harrisburg Is Fabulous Gay-friendly City Author Says

Cities were chosen for "50 Fabulous Gay-Friendly Places to Live" based on how amenable they are to gay folks. Harrisburg is one of those 50 cities, according to author Gregory Kompes.

Among the amenities noted are Alternative Central newspaper, The Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, and PrideFest. Kompes told Alternative Central he will correct the one error in his first edition citing Harrisburg as without civil rights protections.

Kompes has loved travel all his life and the idea for his book blends well with his interest in other places. As a kid I began traveling with The Zagreb Jr. Tamburitizans, a Croatian music and dance ensemble, he says.

As he grew older, he played in musical theater pit orchestras. Eventually he dropped out of college to play in theaters. Kompes spent more than a decade traveling the US, Canada, and the Far East with theater tours, ending up in New York City playing off-Broadway.

It's wonderful seeing and exploring the world, especially at someone else's expense. It was fabulous to merge my love of travel with writing in 50 Fabulous Gay-Friendly Places to Live.

What criteria did Kompes use?

Gay-friendly cities are fun places to live and visit. They provide diverse opportunities and entertainment in a tolerant environment, Kompes says. Cities were chosen based on a combination of the following criteria: An Active Gay Community with well Sponsored Activities and Events; Positive Gay Health and Outreach Programs; Gay Positive Politics and City Policies; Gay Owned Businesses; Fun Nightlife: Clubs, Bars, Music; Local Gay Publications; Cultural Opportunities (museums, symphonies, ballet, theater, etc.); and, Recreational Opportunities (sports, clubs, area attractions, etc.).

Why did Kompes include economic development, tax, and employment data in his book?

Everyone needs a well-paying job if they're to live a balanced life. The current and future economic outlook determines what types of jobs are available. When cities invest in their economic infrastructure they're investing in residents future, Kompes says.

How does Kompes think Richard Florida's work (the subject of previous AC stories) theory on the importance of diversity holding up? Florida's book, The Rise of the Creative Class, should be required

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Includes Interactive CD
50 FABULOUS GAY-FRIENDLY PLACES TO LIVE
GREGORY A. KOMPES

1st Gay Pride Parade Chaired by Dan Stroup

The Pride Festival of Central PA recently announced its 1st Gay Pride Parade for Central PA, chaired by volunteer Dan Stroup, who provides Alternative Central with details.

1. What made you decide a parade was in order?

Truthfully, this was not originally my idea. The visionary on this event is Ms. Biscuit. She actually wanted to have this event last year. She laid the foundation and created buzz in central Pennsylvania, but it was too late in the season to do the event justice. To pull it off with the fabulousness only a drag queen can provide.

I got involved with PrideFest last year for the first time as a volunteer working the gates. I saw all these great groups in our community participating in Pride. I noticed they were all doing their own thing. I asked our Pride Committee what it would take to rally our community to greater unity. Many suggested having our first Pride Parade by expanding on Ms Biscuit's original idea.

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PrideFest 06
UNITY PARADE

BAGAL Seeks New Members

The Business Association of Gays and Lesbians (BAGAL) is a South Central Pennsylvania glbt association of professional and business people and their allied friends offering networking, social, and community service opportunities for its members and friends.

BAGAL meet every other month. Interested persons who are not members are invited to

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62 Area Artists Do Lunch

What's smaller than a cow? Still painted by an artist? Will provide over 150 meals in a soup kitchen? And makes a nifty purse?

A Midtown Lunch Box!

Mayor Stephen R. Reed and City Councilwoman Gloria Martin-Roberts have agreed to

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Wanted: Lots of Fun Guys

Young Gay/Bi Men Seek Community

Recruiting for the gay military? Wrong.

Promoting a new dating service? Wrong again. Although you may find a cute guy to date at one of these events. A new group, called 30 Below, the area's newest social group made up of fun gay and bi guys 18 to 29 is looking for you.

Originally known as the Harrisburg Mpowerment Project, the group exploded onto the South Central Pennsylvania gay scene in July 2005. Since then, 30 Below has organized a number of cool events, including a movie night, hiking trip, potluck dinner, and pizza party and game night.

The group's special events are planned and led by a core group of guys who meet weekly.

Currently, the guys hang out together every Monday evening at 7:00 pm at Midtown Cinema, 250 Reily Street, Harrisburg.

30 Below is planning to launch a web site by Spring. Look out for the group at www.30below.org. They're always looking for new guys to join in the fun, supportive community for young gay and bi guys in the region.

Interested in getting involved, contact Shane at 717.215.8437 or email coregrouphbg@yahoo.com.

Junior Vasquez Talks to Us
Page 31

"Dear Dot" New Advice Column
PAGE 28

Cumberland Valley Artists & Antiques Celebration
PAGE 14

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First Dover, Now Rover

Do Anti-gays Have Dog Sex on the Brain?

By Frank Pizzoli, Publisher

"No same-sex marriage. No plural marriage. Can't marry your motorcycle or your dog or anything," says Michael Geer, president of Pennsylvania Family Institute, summarizing his group's anti-gay marriage proposal.

For conservatives and professional Christians, the issue boils down to fears about the sexuality of pets. And motorcycles. Meanwhile, more than 1 million Pennsylvanians are without health insurance, most of them children of working parents. Surprisingly, this dismal situation is not a "family values" issue for this crowd.

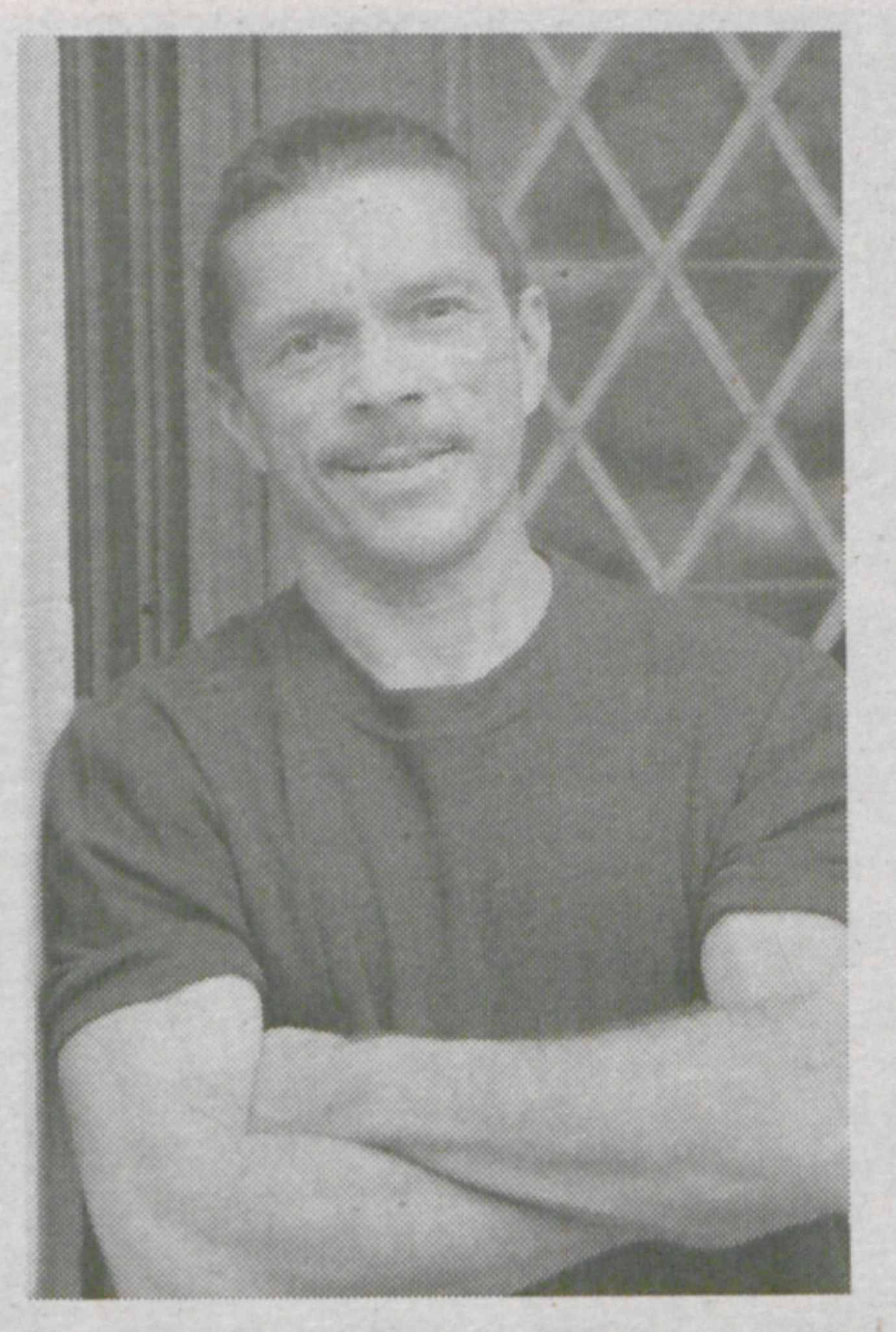
Do they realize or even care how silly they sound?

Charles Darwin's great-great-grandson, Matthew Chapman, writing for Harper's magazine penned: "Dover lies a mere thirty miles from the three Mile Island nuclear plant, and the meltdown of its core and subsequent leak in the Seventies is responsible for the wired behavior now seen in the locals." Pen in cheek, he also writes: "I have no evidence for this belief, and my lack of evidence is a matter of pride." Just like the former Dover school board members and their supporters. No evidence.

Dogs at Risk?

What forms the core of the rabid beliefs spewed by anti-gay and/or anti-evolutionists? Why do those fearful for Rover's plight think, mistakenly, that they know best what each of us ought to believe? Are they, as some believe, suffering from a newly-emerging form of mental illness? One that manifests itself in believing – like one who is delusional – that they know what's best for everyone? Does their behavior represent a new form of narcissism?

Perhaps anti-evolution and anti-gay zealots – much like a Taliban – are so convinced of their rightfulness they can justify lying. As federal Judge John Jones III noted in his ruling, they:



''time and again lie[d] to cover their tracks and disguise the real purpose." Their real purpose was to promote religion. Their religion.

Originator of the "be fearful for the dogs" theory, Senator Rick Santorum has said that intelligent design is a ''legitimate scientific theory that should be taught in science classes."

Why do so many anti-gay activists fear for dogs?

Why are so many homophobes themselves gay? Do the members of the PA General Assembly, or their staff members, who are (known) to be gay think others are completely unaware of their hypocrisy? How much longer will gay elected officials be given a "pass" by gay taxpayers who help to foot the bill while they write laws against our interests?

My Myth or Yours?"

Early into the evolving controversy, Bill Buckingham, chair of Dover Area School district's curriculum committee (a self-confessed OxyContin addict, according to Harper's magazine) claimed that "the separation of church and state is mythical." In that same meeting, he said, "This country wasn't founded on Muslim beliefs or evolution. This country was founded on Christianity, and our students should be taught as such."

A closer reading of history, one that takes place with your eyes open, discloses that our country was founded on two driving principles: slavery and the freedom from being forced to tow the line of any one religion.

On the second day of the 1925 Scopes trial, the first legal challenge to evolution in America, Clarence Darrow issued this warning: "Ignorance and fanaticism is ever busy and needs feeding. Always it is feeding and gloating for more." When will their hunger be sated?

At the conclusion of the 2005 Scopes trail, John West, senior

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would love to advertise again with the GREAT paper called the Alternative Central.

Warmest Regards,
Michael Reed, Artist

Dear Editor,

Just got a copy of last issue (Jan-Feb 06) from a friend here in Jim Thorpe – a great newspaper! My partner Rick and I have been together 27 years and have had a shop here for the last 18 years.

Thank you,
Barrett Ravenhurst
Emporium of Curious Goods
Jim Thorpe

Dear Editor,

The new format is fab. Your content is very readable and interesting. The humor makes me laugh out loud. We've needed a newspaper like this for a long time.

A faithful reader,
Ellen

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Keep Your Eye on LOGO

By John Barnett

I love LOGO. And here's why.

As a middle-aged gay men (I turn 45 this year), I have a love-hate, but mostly hate relationship with glbt media. There's always been a lot of silliness in The Advocate: "What does your favorite D-list celebrity think of gay people?"

There's predictability in many gay movies, whether Trick or Latter Days, in which boy-meets-boy, boy-loses-boy, but they eventually live happily ever after. And let's not forget all those button-nosed, buff white guys selling "hot product."

Let's face it, gay media spends promotes lifestyles best described as The Young and the Body Hairless. But that's not different than all media these days. Under 30 men may not yet have digested that extraordinary attention is focused on what gay men are supposed to be: young, trim (but chiseled), smooth, well-financed, well-dressed, well-endowed, urban, and urbane. All by the time you're 26, of course.

Reality check: Whether you're in Hanover, Pennsylvania, or Hanover, Germany, that's not the case. Not everyone buys their partner a Lexus for the holidays. Not everyone lives in a cute, multi-million-dollar bungalow just off the Castro District. Not everyone is a walking, talking Abercrombie Zombie.

So it is with no little fanfare that I cast out my inner-curmudgeon to say these three simple words: I LOVE LOGO, the new national cable channel "for Gay America," now showing on Comcast Cable in the Harrisburg area.

I love the channel because LOGO totally gets it, that glbt people are a family - but like any big, rowdy, crowded-house extended family, we don't all think, act, and look alike.

I've been watching LOGO off and on since the fall, expecting the channel to drop to the lowest common denominator that has trapped gay media for too long. Nevertheless, I'm continually pleasantly surprised by LOGO's wide lens approach to our community.

"Bachelor Farmer"

Where else on one channel can you watch a documentary on rural gays and lesbians in Idaho, like "Bachelor Farmer," alongside "Transgeneration," a series on transsexual college students?

"Heather"

Where can you see a report on ovarian cancer health concerns among women up against a short film, like "Promtroversy," about "Heather" who takes a lesbian classmate to the prom in order to to bug her parents, friends, and school?

"Noah's Arc"

Where else can you watch "Ma Vie en Rose," a sweet Belgian tale of a boy who wants to be a girl, next to "Noah's Arc," a serial comedy-drama about African-American men in Los Angeles?

"New, Now, Next"

Where else can you watch some of the latest, hippest music videos like "New, Now, Next" hosted by two out lesbian rock performers from a band with the impossibly wonderful name of the Booty Olympics?

On LOGO. Nowhere else.

Not everything on LOGO is absolutely flawless, though. Some advertising seems out of place especially portrayals of men worried about what girlfriends will think if they don't immediately go to the Hair Plug Institute of America for follicle

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Gay Pride Parade continued

2. When and where will the parade take place?

The Pride Parade is Saturday, July 29, 10 am (the same day as PrideFest). The parade will launch from the corner of North Street and North Front St. and proceed down North Front St., ending at South Front St near the PrideFest event.

3. We've heard there are two floats already pledged?

Right now (late January) there are no floats pledged, but we've heard from two or three groups they may do a float. We are not officially announcing any participation until we have a group's application in hand. I am hearing exciting talk from our community. There's a buzz about what the different organizations will do. It's nice to see emails coming in from organizations asking how to get involved. We're also working on a 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize for Best in Show. Our hope is to create a friendly competition between the groups and bring out the best in our community.

4. What's the sleaze factor? Some parades in some cities have nakedness, leather men with the back-end out of their chaps, topless women. What's the local take?

Sleaze factor? Simply put: There is none! Public nudity of any kind is still against the law. We believe that we can have fun without being vulgar or inappropriate in public. Truth is we are part of a greater community here in central Pennsylvania. The last thing we want is to have anyone speak negatively about our events. We'd rather they speak of our community in terms of good things we've accomplished.

5. How can people get involved?

There are many ways we encourage people to get involved:

1. You can join or volunteer with any one of our community's fine organizations and march with that group.

2. You can be a volunteer for the parade. We need people directing groups behind the scene and keeping the event flowing.

3. You can be a sponsor for the Pride Parade and/or Pride itself. As with any endeavor, we need money to pull off an event of this size.

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Thursday March 9th Drag Show to benefit The Green High Heel Race 10pm
Thursday March 16th Amateur Strip Night Win $75.00 11pm
Friday March 17th St Patrick□s Day Dance Party and Green Beer Night
Thursday March 23rd Jager Night - Free giveaways from the Jagermeister Company
Sunday March 26th Drag Show to benefit Harrisburg Angels
Women□s Football Team 9pm
Thursday March 30th 80□s New Wave Dance Party 10pm - 2am

April
Thursday April 6th Goth Music Night 10pm - 2am
Thursday April 13th Latin Music Night 10pm - 2am
Thursday April 20th Amateur Strip Night Win $75.00 11pm
Sunday April 23rd Drag Show to benefit Aids Walk of Harrisburg 9pm
Friday April 28th & Saturday April 29th
Freaky Tiki Beach Party Weekend
Sunday April 30th Miss Gay Harrisburg
Pageant 9pm

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Friday March 10st Drag Show to benefit The Green High Heel Race 11pm
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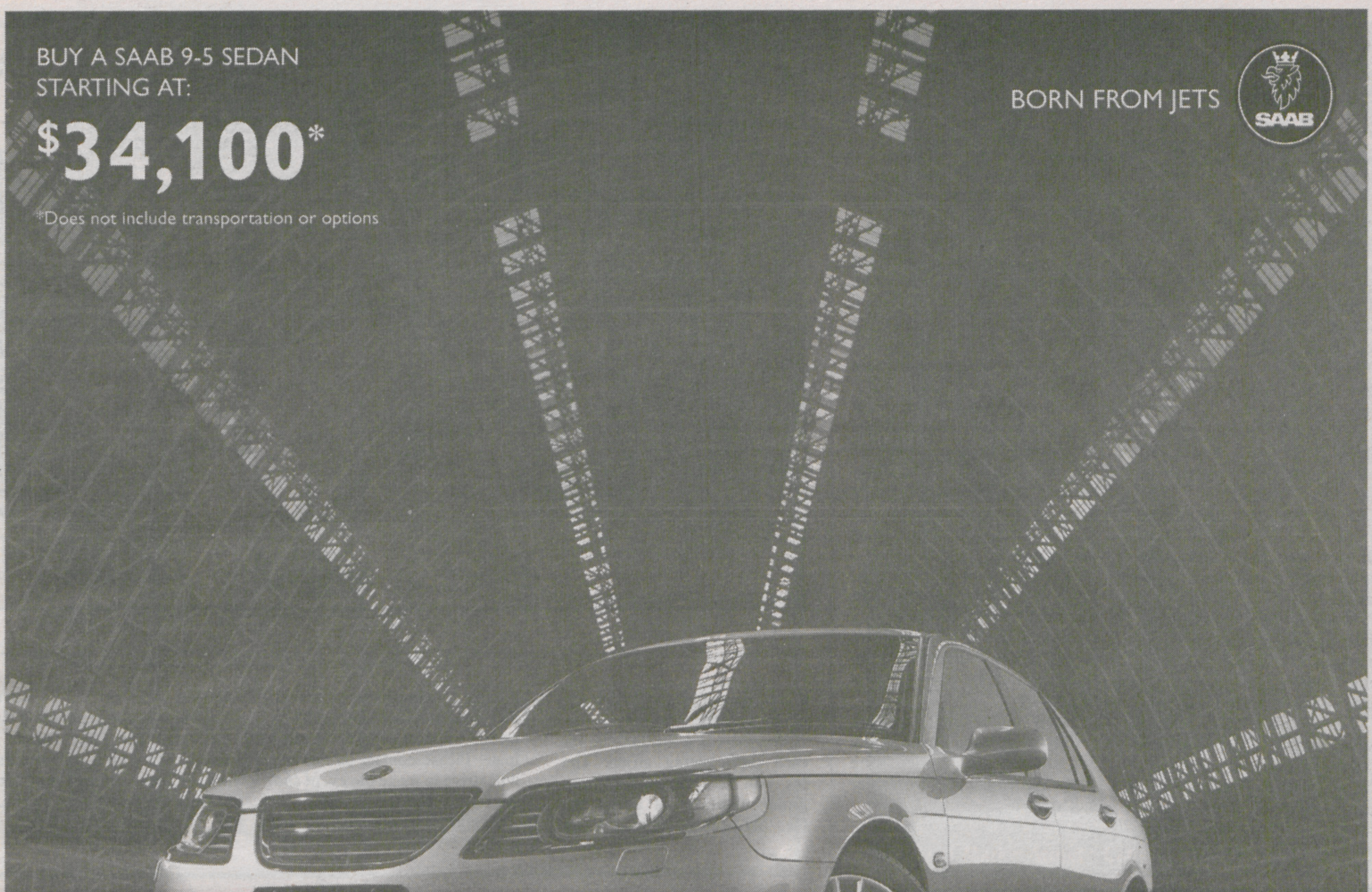
April
Friday April 14th Drag Show to benefit Women□s Football League of Harrisburg 11pm
Friday April 21st Amateur Strip Night Win $25.00 11pm
Friday April 28th & Saturday April 29th Freaky Tiki Beach Party Weekend



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"Brokeback" Awards Irk Senator

Santorum Backs Ban on Gay Westerns

The Borowitz Report
by Andy Borowitz

Three days after the critically acclaimed film "Brokeback Mountain" won Golden Globe awards in four major categories, Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Penn) called for a constitutional amendment banning gay westerns.

"We cannot sit idly by and watch 'Brokeback Mountain' sashay into the mainstream of American culture," Mr. Santorum said on the Senate floor today. "If allowed to flourish, gay westerns will destroy the sanctity of traditional westerns."

He added that if the film continued to gain acceptance in the heartland, several western states might soon legalize marriage between gay cowboys.

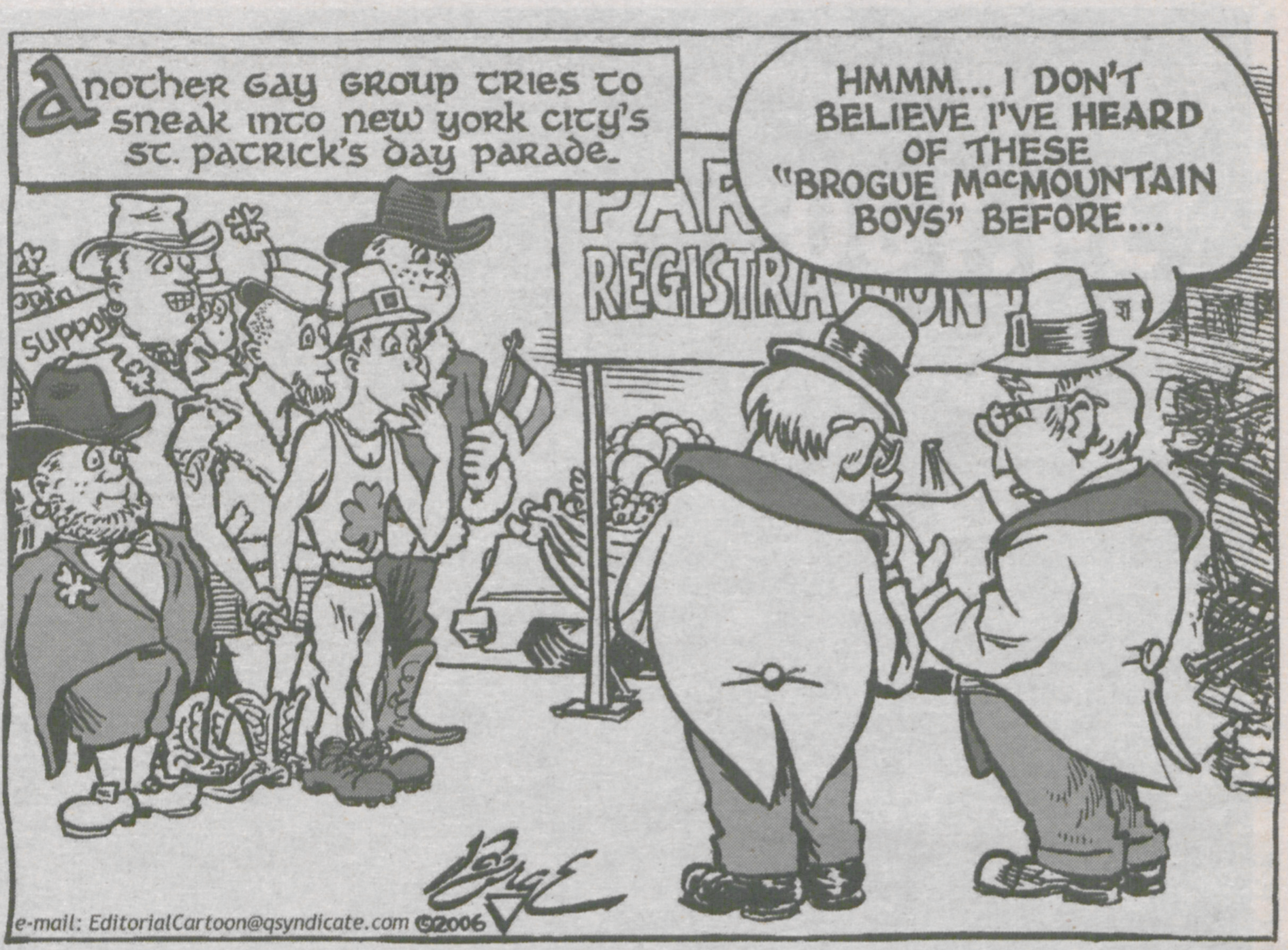
The Pennsylvania senator explained that his proposal of a constitutional amendment banning gay westerns was not a rash decision on his part: "I only reached this decision after watching 'Brokeback Mountain' ten, maybe twelve times."

Mr. Santorum added that it was "unconscionable" that the producers of the film had cast an actor as "hot and sexy" as Heath Ledger as one of the gay cowboys, since "he only makes the gay cowboy lifestyle seem more enticing."

In a sign that Mr. Santorum may have more constitutional amendments to propose, he said that he was also "very concerned" that Hollywood might someday produce a remake of the film "Benji" featuring "man on dog sex."

"I am going to be extra vigilant on this issue," Mr. Santorum said. "If there is a remake of 'Benji' featuring man on dog sex, I will be waiting in line for a ticket on the very first day."

Elsewhere, the Supreme Court voiced support for assisted suicide, and model Kate Moss voiced support for career suicide.


Another gay group tries to sneak into New York City's St. Patrick's Day parade.
HMMM... I DON'T BELIEVE I'VE HEARD OF THESE "BROGUE MacMOUNTAIN BOYS" BEFORE...
PAR
REGISTRA
SUPPO
Bange

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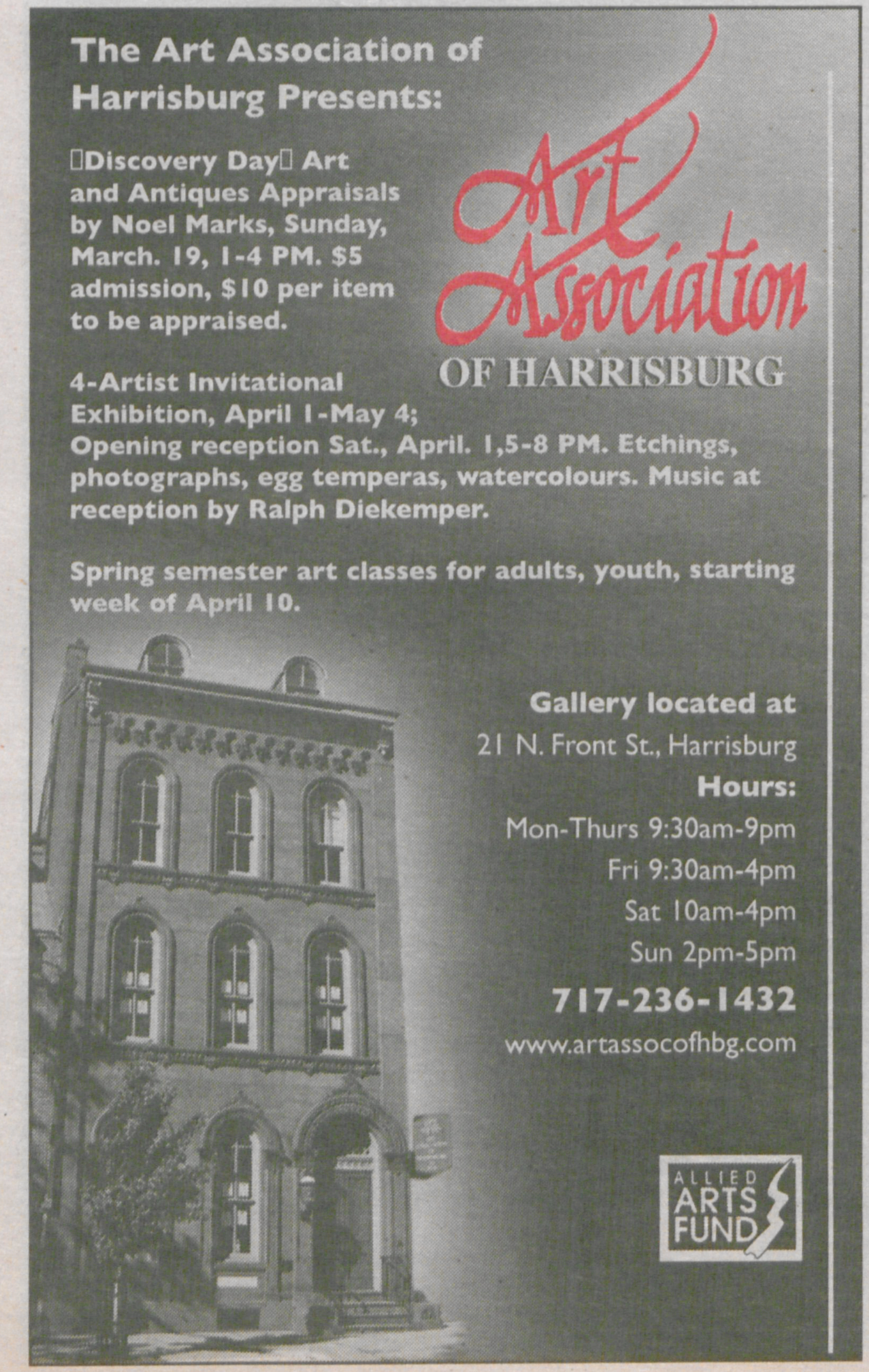
Gay Pride Parade continued

6. Are there fees to participate in the event?

Yes, there is a $100.00 fee for each participating group. The fee will be waived for those groups that cannot afford the fee, but we are asking those groups to contribute whatever they can. It's more important to us that we have everyone participate. Please contact us and we will strive to make the event and the fees work for everyone.

If you have questions about getting involved, call 717-421-4801 or email Centralpagayprideparade@Hotmail.com. The Pride Parade is also working on a web site that in the near future will link to/from the PrideFest web site.


The Art Association of Harrisburg Presents:

"Discovery Day" Art and Antiques Appraisals by Noel Marks, Sunday, March. 19, 1-4 PM. $5 admission, $10 per item to be appraised.

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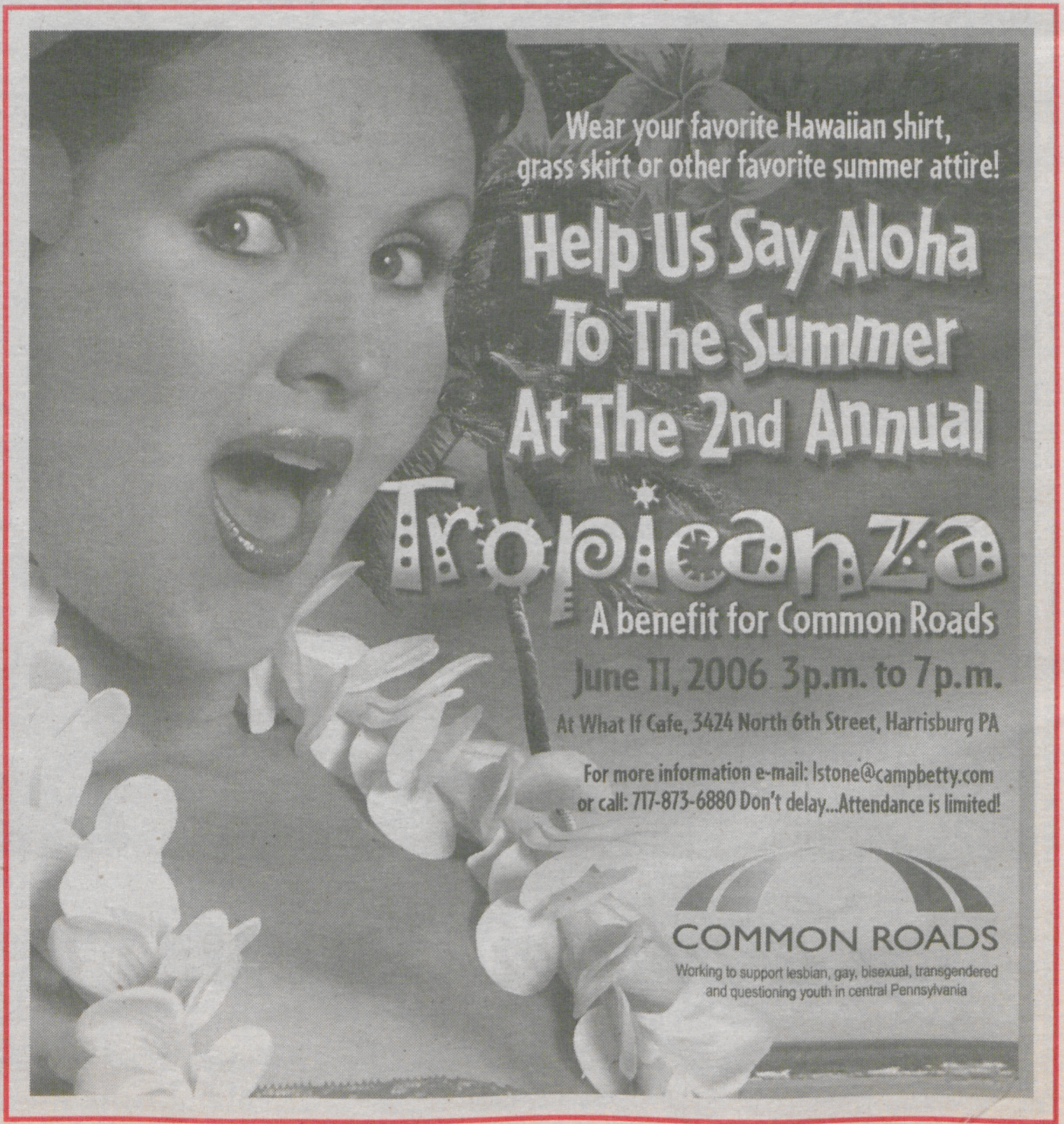
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In "Deferred" Blood

By Derek J. Cordier, Esquire

After the Tsunami and Katrina disasters, I signed up for an orientation to become a Red Cross volunteer. I was given a VCR tape to begin my training in disaster relief. It is waiting to be loaded into the VCR.

Ironically, a friend of mine recently asked me "when are they going to change the blood donation law?" I really had not thought about the impact of the Food and Drug Administration's banning all gay men from donating blood - for life.

My friend told me the story of his experience when he attempted to donate. They did not ask if he had any infectious disease. They did not ask if he was an intravenous drug user. They did not ask if he had been tested for HIV. They didn't even ask if he would answer the questions honestly. They only asked if he had sex with another man since 1977. When he answered the sex question in the affirmative, they told him that he would be "deferred" from donating and that he would have to sign a document that used his social security number to mark him as a "deferred" donor for life. "Deferred" is the FDA's term for "banned."

In 1985, the FDA banned all men who had sexual relations with another man anytime since 1977. They also banned all men and women who had sexual relations for money or drugs since 1977. The FDA reasoned that as a group, gay men and those who have sex for money or drugs have a higher risk for contracting HIV than the general population. The ban extended to bone marrow. The FDA also requires blood collectors to report anyone who has been deferred, so a list can be kept and those on it may never donate. The Red Cross supports the FDA's ban.

I cannot believe how nonsensical it all is. Is the "list" being kept for those who decide to lie about their sex lives and attempt to donate after they have already told the truth? Then there is the fact that a women can donate even if she slept with a gay man - yesterday!

Since my friend gets tested regularly, there is a good chance that he is less of a risk for transmitting HIV to the blood supply than the room full of straight people waiting with him to donate.

The FDA website states that the advancements in HIV blood testing have lessened the risk to 1 in 2 million donations. Every unit of donated blood is tested for HIV, Hepatitis, Human T-Lymphotropic Virus, and Syphilis. Those in need of certain blood or specific bone marrow do not have a choice in the matter.

In the United States there are 3.5 million patients who receive blood transfusions each year. Some of those will die simply because there is a shortage of blood and marrow and gay men cannot donate. It does not matter how many tests are made on the blood to ensure its safety. The decision to "defer" gay men for life was made from fear and bigotry. It is an example of the way society paints the picture that gay men are not created equal. I will happily be doing more work for AIDS Community Alliance. The VCR tape is going back to the Red Cross - unwatched.

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ART CLASSES
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HBG Fabulous continued

reading at the high school and college levels, Kompes says. The creative class is becoming a reality in our country, he notes, and Kompes is glad to see the lgbt community at the core of that class. The fact that Florida's creative-index cities mirror the most gay-friendly cities in the country is an indicator that his theories aren't just holding up, but leading the way into our economic future, Kompes predicts.

Does Kompes, as do some authors and activists, think we're in a "post-gay" period of life? Does being glbt matter anymore? How can the glbt community reconcile the politi-

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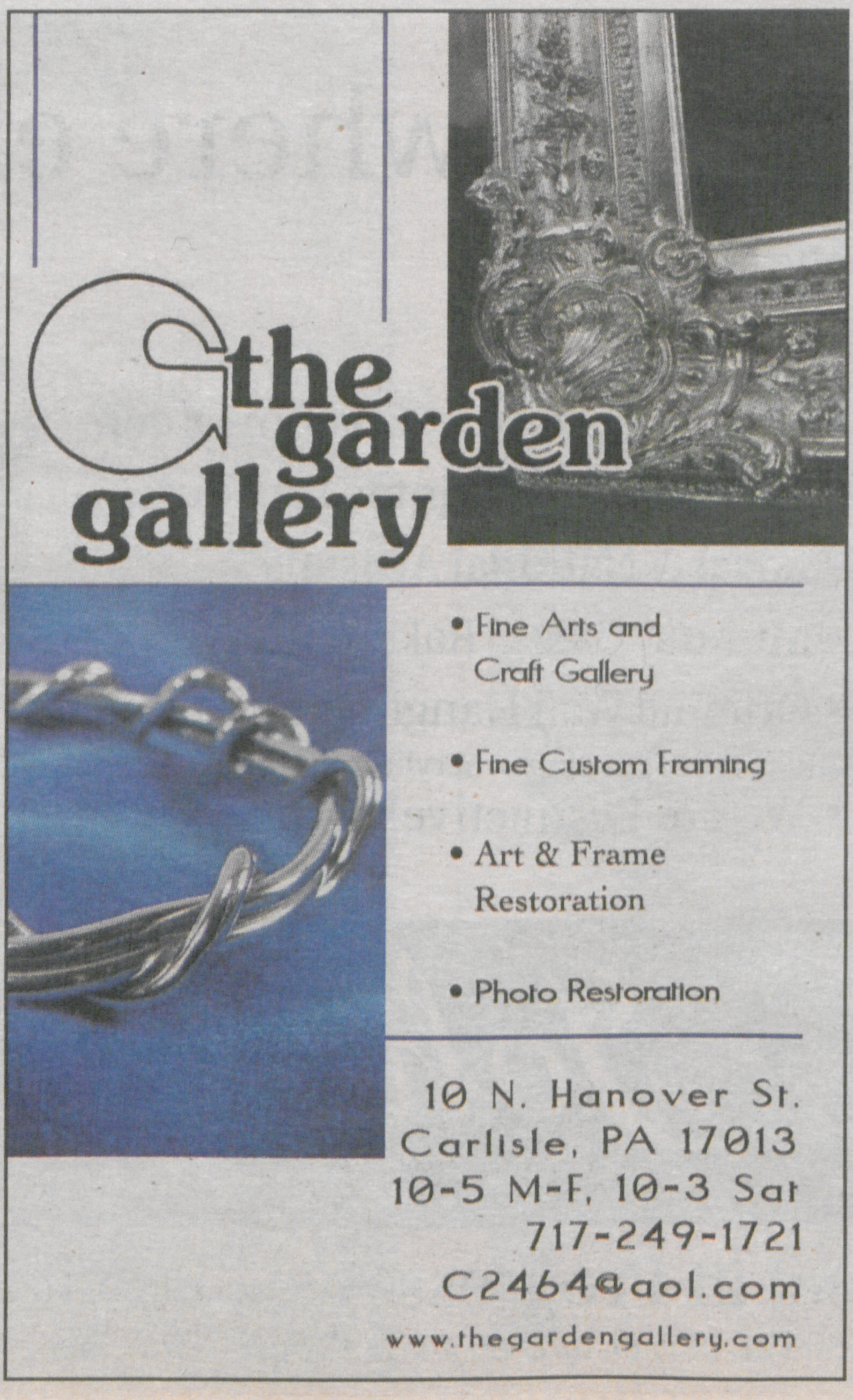

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Harrisburg Symphony Presents Mahler's "Resurrection" for Diamond Anniversary

On March 19, 1931, the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra gave its first concert in William Penn Auditorium in Harrisburg. Seventy-five years later, the HSO will celebrate the diamond anniversary of that occasion with performances of Gustav Mahler's monumental 2nd Symphony ("Resurrection") on March 18 and 19, 2006.

The orchestra's Music Director, Stuart Malina, will conduct. Mahler's deeply spiritual and emotional work speaks of life's transitory nature and encourages the listener to find hope in the knowledge that all will rise again in the love of the eternal Spirit.

Performed without intermission, the symphony features Janice Chandler-Eteme, soprano, Angela Horn, mezzo-soprano, and the combined forces of the Susquehanna Chorale, Messiah College Concert Choir, Messiah College Chorale Arts Society and the Alumni Chorale of Lebanon Valley College.

These 75th Anniversary concerts are generously sponsored by The Hall Foundation. Performances are Saturday at 8PM and Sunday at 3PM at the Forum, 5th & Walnut Streets in downtown Harrisburg.

Single tickets for all Harrisburg Symphony events can be purchased by visiting www.harrisburgsymphony.org or by calling The Box at (717) 214-ARTS. Five-dollar student rush tickets are available at the door 30 minutes prior to the concert with a valid student ID.

Art Auction Too

As part of its 75th anniversary celebration, HSO will auction off an original painting by the acclaimed British artist, Simon Bull. The painting, conceived and created with the symphony and its anniversary in mind, will be auctioned during a reception

continued on page 29

BAGAL continued

be our guests for their first meeting.

At its January meeting, new officers elected were: Judy Chambers and Russell Boggs as co-chairs. Tom Caruso was elected membership chair. Dan Miller, newly elected Harrisburg City Council member and one of BAGAL's founders, made a presentation.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15. at the Best Western Inn and Suites (www.bestwesternharrisburg), 6:30 - 8:30 PM. Representatives of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (www.NGLCC.org) will discuss their organization. The National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) is an organization committed to expanding economic opportunities of LGBT-owned and friendly businesses.

Through advocacy, workshops, certification, and networking, they invest in the community and future of LGBT business causes. Interested persons may contact Judy Chambers (mzkleen@comcast.net) or Russ Boggs (russhbg@earthlink.net).

Anti-Gays continued

fellow of the Seattle-based Discovery Institute, a leading promoter of intelligent design, predicted that the ruling will spark renewed interest in the theory. ''Americans don't like to be told what to think about and what to study," he said, adding that ''intelligent design ultimately will rise or fall on scientific evidence."

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Men's Health

by Brian Wolfe, The Fitness Firm

Start Spring Exercises Slowly

After months of freezing temperatures, when the first warm day hits, most people are ready to get active. However, if you were a couch potato all winter long, you may need to start spring exercise slowly to prevent injuries.

Walking is a great method to start your spring exercise. Walking may have more advantages than any other fitness activity, and yet it is the most basic. Walking has many benefits including:

Controls high blood pressure
Boosts the level of H.D.L. (healthy cholesterol) in the blood
Decreases stress and improves self esteem
Improves energy levels
Increases strength of bones and muscles and mobility
It is safe and non-intimidating
It requires no special skills
All ages can participate
No special equipment is required
You can walk anywhere
You can do it on your own or with others

There are a number of walking programs out there but one of the best is called The 10,000 Step Walking Program. This program uses walking as the catalyst for dropping unwanted fat and improving overall health. The program incrementally adds more steps as the participant progresses.

A simple pedometer, which is a device that measures steps and a good pair of walking shoes is all that is needed. This simple walking workout provides a long-term solution for those looking to lose excess fat, strengthen their bodies, improve endurance and feel better.

You already are active each day walking up stairs, mowing the lawn, cleaning, and other daily tasks. These all contribute to your health and well-being. Now just being conscience of your activity during the day can help you be and stay healthy.

You'll use your pedometer to get an accurate baseline of your current activity. Having the pedometer on throughout each day will increase your consciousness and motivation about lifestyle activity. During the first week of the program, pay attention to your daily number of steps. Seek ways to increase your activity level through normal lifestyle activities such as talking the stairs instead of the elevator.

Your ultimate goal is to walk 10,000 steps per day, which is equivalent to 30 minutes of continuous aerobic activity. Think of exercise as part of your daily routine. Where are their opportunities to be more active throughout your day? Taking these activity breaks throughout the day will improve your health, fitness and energy level.

After your first week, your goal is to boost your average number of steps by 20%. Add the total steps taken in week one and divide by seven. Then multiply by 1.2. The result is your new target number for daily steps. So, if you averaged 3,000 steps a day in week one, try for 3,600 a day in week two.

Strategies to improve your number of steps!
Take the stairs whenever possible
Go for a 5-minute walk break several times during the workday.
Walk every isle in the supermarket
Park at the end of the parking lot
Deliver things to co-workers in person
Take a walk in the park
Vacuum your house more often
Do your own yard work
Walk the golf course - don't ride a cart

Transitioning from winter to spring can be challenging. Being conscience of your activity is all it takes to ensure a healthy spring and summer. Start your walking program now.

Brian Wolfe, M.S., is Fitness Director at The Fitness Firm. His fitness research has appeared in The American College of Sports Medicine Journal.

Transgender: Genetic Influence

By Kristen Richards

Does genetics dictate our gender identity?

First, what is gender? As a noun, Webster's definition is "the state of being male or female." Gender identity, defined legally is "a person's various individual attributes based on the understanding of being masculine or feminine."

Western Society's views are "an innate sense of maleness - masculinity or femaleness - femininity." External genitalia are also indicative of gender. However, after conception, genetic deviations from the normal XX, XY chromosomal makeup (Female, Male) occur such as, XO or XXY, to name a few. Other conditions, despite being XX and XY, happen, such as intersexed and transexuality.

The XXY sequence, Klinefelder Syndrome, occurs in one in every 500 births, resulting in 47 chromosomes, as opposed to 46. These individuals are usually sterile, have small genitalia, enlarged breasts and virtually no sexual drive. They present as androgynous, or in-between.

Turner's Syndrome, XO, results in having 45 chromo-

continued on page 11

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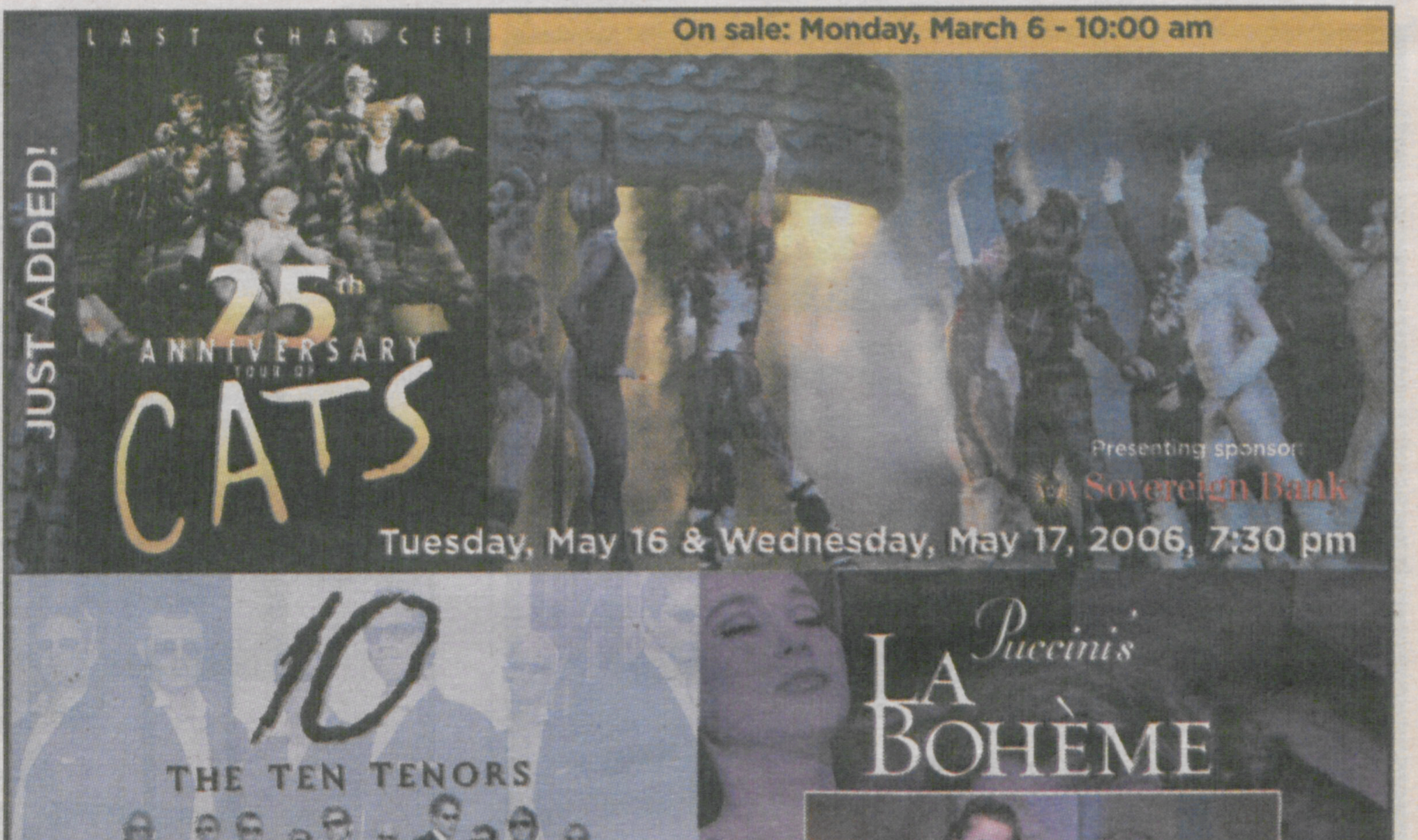

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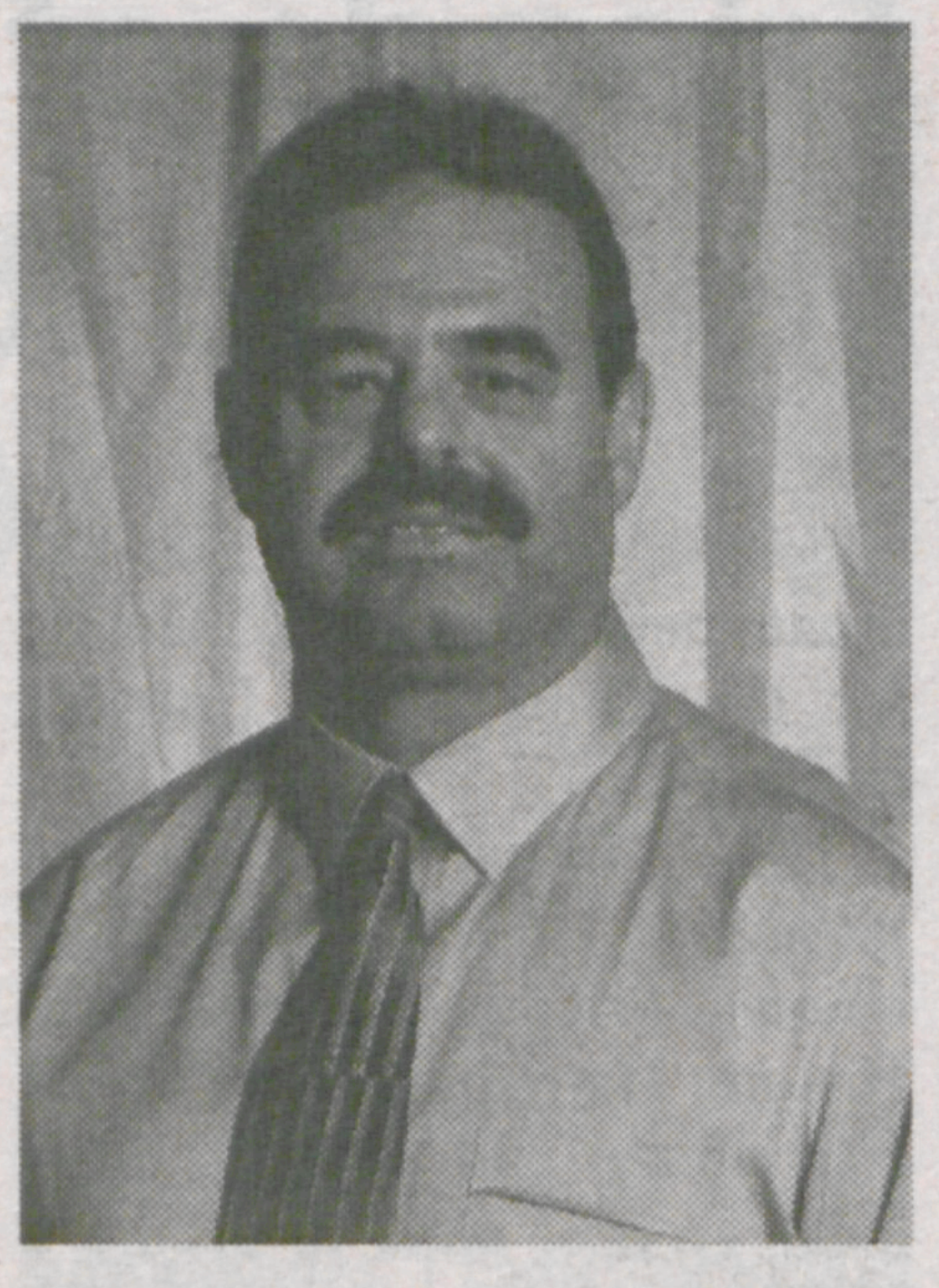


C5 Fitness recently took over two Woody's Workout facilities (East and West Shores) and merged with the Platinum Health and Fitness facility on Jonestown Road. Since the mergers and acquisitions, all three facilities have undergone major upgrades and renovations, and a revamping of fitness classes, equipment and personal training programs.

The savvy health club now offers an expanded cardio area with treadmills and room for spin classes, stationary bicycles, elliptical machines, and enhanced free-weight and nautilus. They also host a small room used for boxers in training.

C5 Fitness also added celebrity trainer Chuck Fields to the staff. Fields brings to the region a new approach toward fitness. With a wide smile, infectious optimism, and many years of knowledge in the world of exercise and personal training, Fields has inserted his laid-back West Coast attitude to the mix.

Fields is a font of training knowledge. "I've worn just about every hat," he says. "I've done facilities design to running my own personal training company."

Fields also has a celebrity following, including famed Olympic diver Greg Louganis, whom Fields says is the only celebrity he's allowed to mention by name.

"I started working with Greg shortly before the 1984 Olympics," Fields says. His eye for details pertaining to the nuances of complex muscle development quickly noticed something hindering Louganis' performance.

Fields saw what he thought was "a twitch" in Louganis' shoulder. The twitch was likely resulted from his recent surgery. Fields had him work on building the muscle around the shoulder area. "Divers like Louganis hit the water at about 35 mph." Fields explains.

Fields humorously adds that during an interview on television Louganis dropped his name. "That was my cue to raise my rates," he says laughing.

With degrees in exercise physiology and exercise science, it's safe to say Fields is amply prepared for the world of sports competition. "I've always been into weightlifting," fields said. Learning gymnastics really push him into weights. "I was in high school and wanted to play football. One day I caught the gymnastics coach talking with the football coach.

I approached them mentioning I wanted to play football." Fields was told by the gruff football coach he needed to put on weight. Thus began his passion with staying fit.

Although he's only been with C5 Fitness since September 2005, Fields' world-class fitness regimen meshed well with C5 president, Aaron Mimran, and his overall vision for growing the company.

"We talked about doing a lot of things I did when working for 24Hour Fitness." Fields says. "They wanted fitness programs brought to a new level. I joined C5 Fitness in order to bring the fitness program in-house instead of relying on outside contractors." The facility offers an "Orientation To Fitness" for new comers. "Anyone walking through the door can establish a fitness program," Fields says.

Since adoption of the OTF, C5 Fitness has seen membership increase. Fields adds for those who have no interest in personal training, whether it be an issue with cost or that a prospective member has their own fitness regimen, C5 Fitness provides their OTF program at no additional charge.

"Even if you don't purchase a membership." Fields says, adding "At least we know that you're safe and most of all you'll see results."

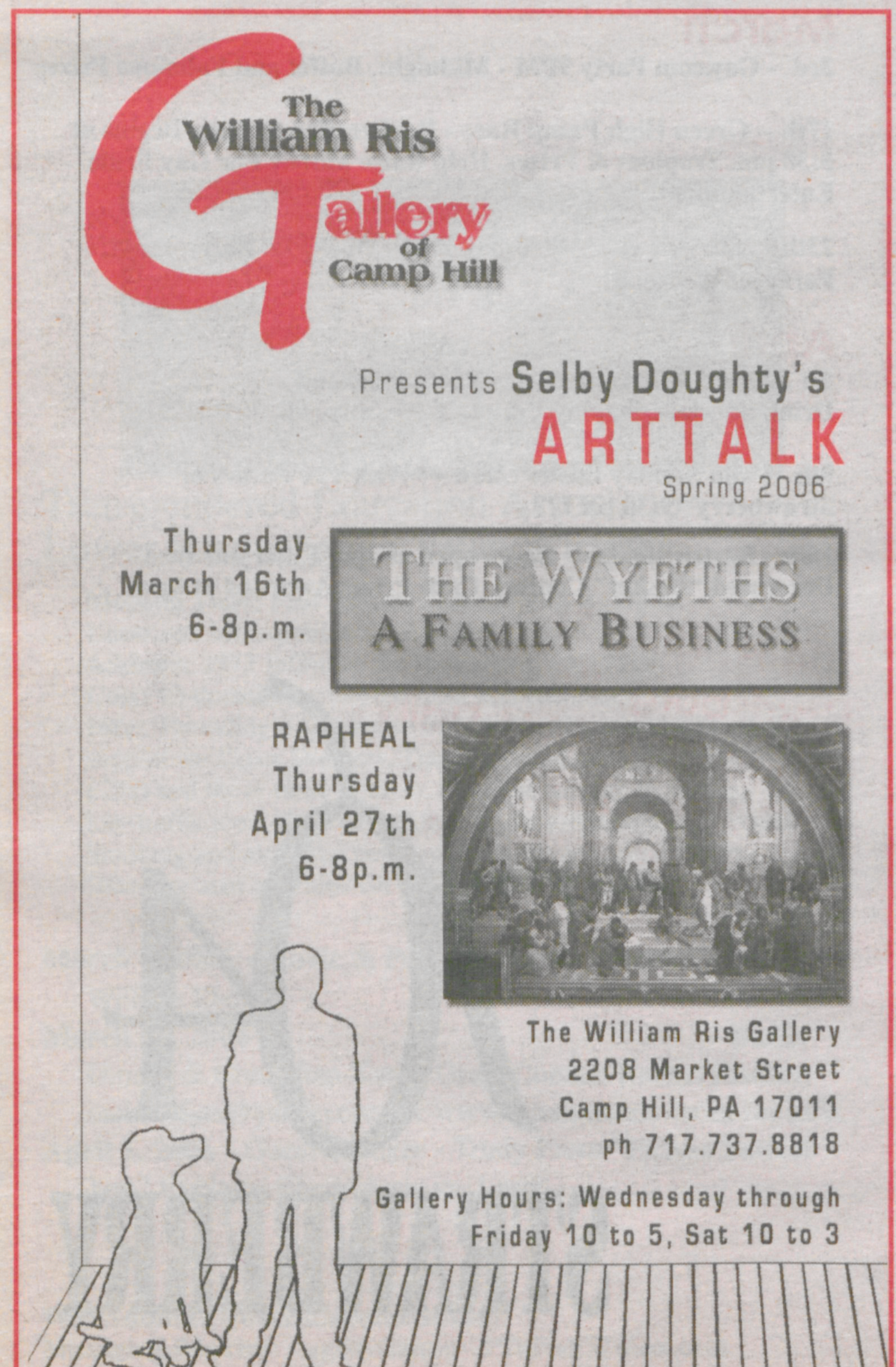
Transgender continued

somes. The missing chromosome prevents the female from developing gonads, absent of testosterone but remarkably, exhibiting "Tom Boy" characteristics.

Intersexed individuals are usually sterile, having ambiguous or deformed genitalia and can be corrected surgically. However, puberty is usually the optimal time to consider surgical corrections while the child learns their true identity.

Transexuality is the most subtle of all variations. Their brain gender does not match their physical gender, making the condition invisible. Exuding very masculine/feminine behaviors, while continually attempting to extricate feelings of abnormality is common. Once the feelings are embraced, Hormone Replacement Therapy and occasionally genital reassignment surgery can usually correct this condition.

Scientifically, we are at the cusp of genetic understanding. As indicated above, Human beings are on a gender continuum. The latter two conditions can be the result of a few genes on a chromosome gone awry or not receiving proper amounts of testosterone during key stages of fetal development. When the former steroid-ravaged Mr. Universe and now Governor of California uses the term "Girlie-man," genetically, he is occasionally correct.



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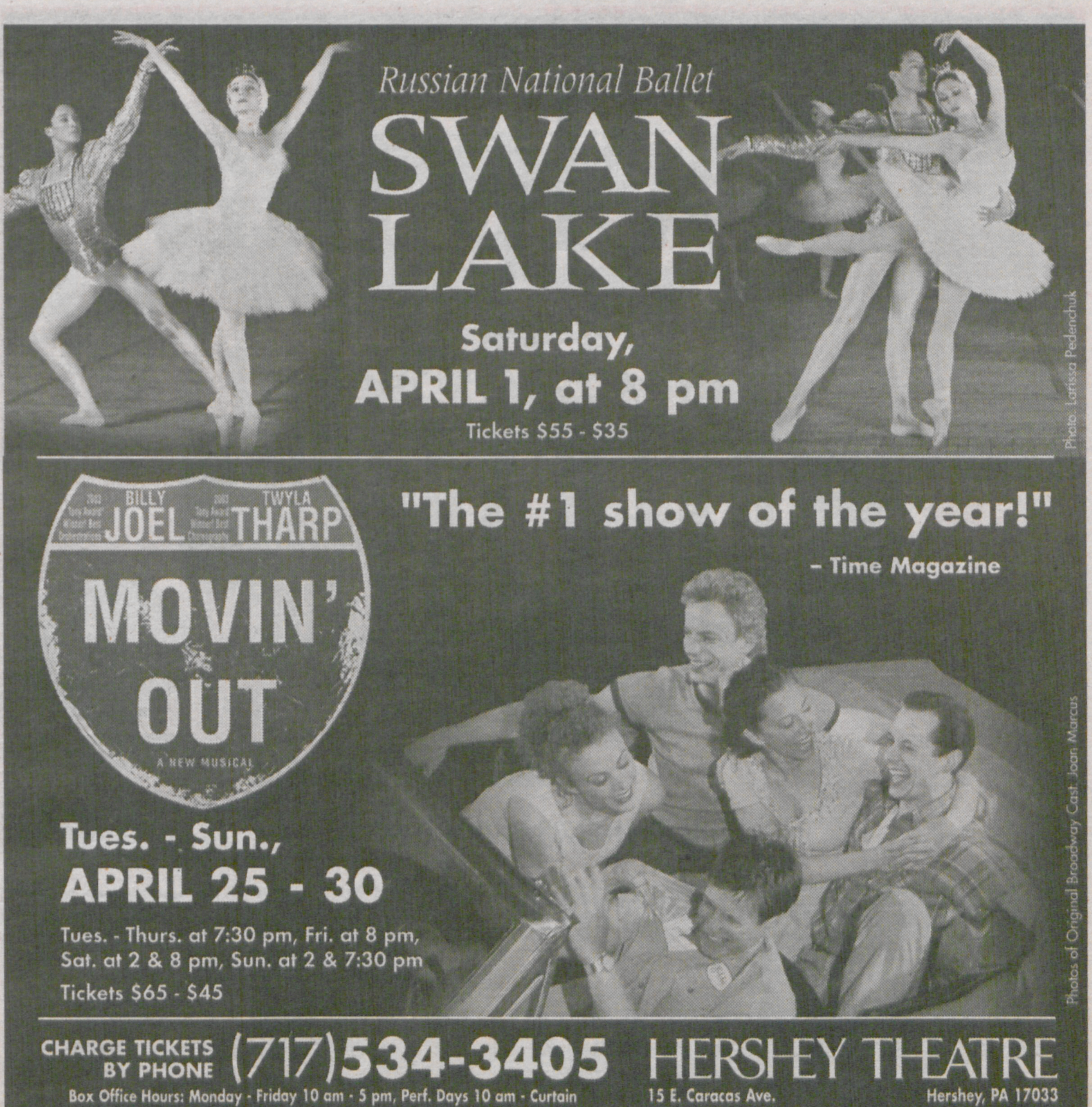

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Minimum Credit Card Payments Likely to Increase

By Maryanne Knaub
American Home Mortgage

Minimum credit card payments, by some reports, are likely to increase as much as 50%, due to concerns raised by federal bank regulators, including the Office of the Controller of the Currency (which regulates the national banks that issue credit cards).

With fewer people making headway in paying back their credit card debts, federal regulators would like to help people pay bills faster and slash the interest due.

For example, doubling minimum payments from 2% to 4% will offer dramatic savings. A customer with a $10,000 balance at a 16% interest rate who makes a 2% minimum monthly payment will take over 40 years to pay off the balance ($19,329 in interest). With a 4% minimum, the loan is paid in about 14 years with interest costs of $4,931.

For those hit hard by increased minimum payments, consider the following:

Create a budget. Know where money is being spent, set limits and redirect the savings to pay down credit cards.

Contact creditors. Let credit card companies know when you are having trouble meeting new minimum payments. Credit card companies might offer a modified payment plan.

Get a new card. Transfer a balance to a lower-interest credit card.

Refinance your mortgage. Consolidate credit card debt within a refinanced mortgage to dramatically reduce your monthly cash outlay while possibly benefiting from the tax deductibility of your mortgage interest.

For further information and/or a a free debt assessment and mortgage consultation, Knaub can be reached at 717-612-5211; Cell 717-580-8868; Maryanne.knaub@americanhm.com.

Friends of Midtown Harrisburg Hope to Revive Neighborhoods

Friends of Midtown late last month held a follow-up meeting for the Third Street Corridor Initiative.

The Initiative, revived through a strategic partnership among Friends of Midtown, Historic Harrisburg, the City of Harrisburg and several other local groups, aims to secure a $25,000 planning grant through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Elm Street Program.

The grant would implement an economic and community revitalization program for Midtown Harrisburg.

Administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), the Elm Street Program was conceived as an extension of the Main Street Program, a federally-funded program developed in conjunction with the National Trust for Historic Preservation to assist and encourage the revitalization of small business districts in cities and towns across the United States.

The Elm Street Program, building upon the Main Street model, uses $25,000 planning grants to assist communities in achieving their re-development goals for residential neighborhoods surrounding revitalized business districts. The geographic boundaries for the Third Street Corridor Initiative run from Forster to Maclay Streets, and from Front to Seventh Streets.

Drawing on the expertise of Bill Fontana, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, a Five Point Approach has been devised laying out the goals for midtown revitalization in the hopes of increasing midtown's chances of receiving an Elm Street planning grant.

The Five Point Approach includes the following focuses:

Clean, Safe, and Green – Crime prevention, litter cleanup, etc.

Neighborhoods and Economy – Helping increase home ownership and employment

Design – Characteristics make a neighborhood special

Image and Identity – Attract more residents and visitors via community events

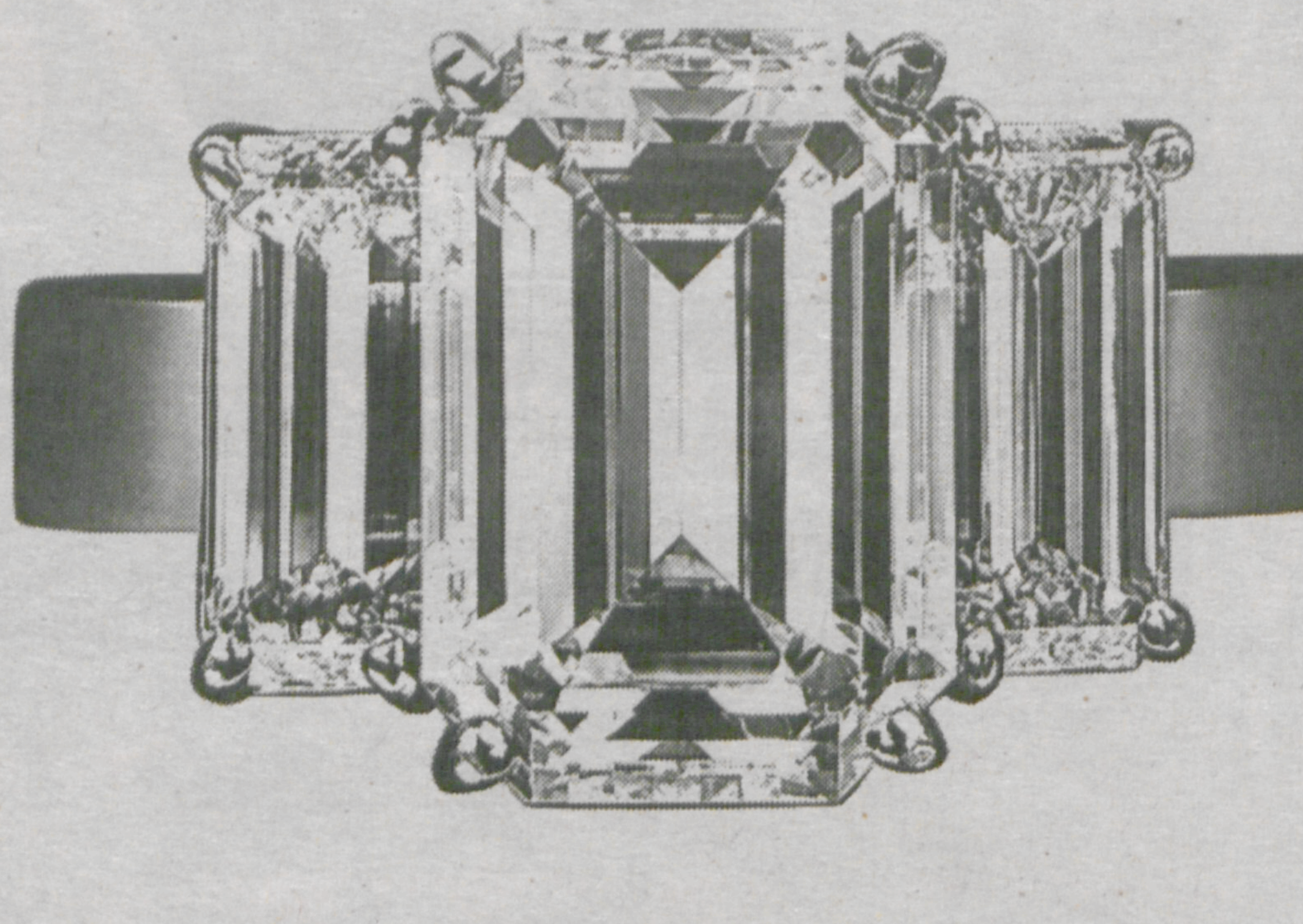
Sustainable Organization – Create conditions for positive growth to continue throughout the years ahead.

When contacted for a comment about the Third Street Corridor Initiative,

"Not only does participation in the Third Street Corridor Initiative and subsequently the Elm Street Program mean exciting and positive change for Midtown residents, but it will also open the door for economic and community development for years to come," says Friends of Midtown President, Dave Robertson.

Information: www.friendsofmidtown.org or email info@friendsofmidtown.org.

Rockzilla



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23th - 26th - Biscuit's Birthday Party Weekend. Party, Party, Party all Weekend!.

April

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16th - Easter Sunday - Doors open at 4pm Enter our Best Decorated "Basket" Contest. Cash Prizes Awarded at 8pm.

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Lesbian Notions

The “D” Word

by Libby Post

The “L” Word finally has a lesbian character I can relate to - Moira, or Max, as she’s also known.

Moira is a butch, working-class, what-you-see-is-what-you-get - at least for the moment - dyke. It seems she’s on a transgender journey, and we’ll have to wait until the story line plays itself out to see where it goes. But for now, it’s the dyke thing that makes me happy.

Don’t get me wrong. I like the show. There’s the sex, the various story lines, the sex, the bizarre characters (I think Jenny is in line to be a serial killer, myself), the sex, the glimpses into a world (West L.A. lesbian lifestyles) that the majority of us will never know, and the sex. Did I mention that already?

But I digress. Let’s get back to that dyke thing. I’ve watched the show religiously - we actually subscribe to Showtime just so we can see it. Yet, when the theme song comes on and the group Betty sings, “It’s the way we live,” I always think, “This isn’t the way “I” live.”

I’m not talking about the nice houses (I live in a really nice house) or the high-powered jobs (I own two businesses and am involved in a joint venture). I’m talking about how they present themselves, how they look, or, as some would say, how they express their gender. I don’t know too many lesbians who wear that much make-up and dress in slinky, silky, spaghetti-string dresses - especially the ones who are jocks.

Maybe my lesbian worldview has been limited by my age and surroundings. I came out almost 30 years ago, when being a lesbian was the logical extension of being a feminist. You could tell a dyke was a dyke, but the butch-femme “thing” was frowned upon because, after all, we didn’t want to be emulating the patriarchy, did we?

It was a time when even our sexual practices were up for political interpretation. I was floored when one radical lesbian told me penetration was politically incorrect.

I’m sure there were plenty of butch-femme couples, but no one was talking gender expression back then, and, at that time, these couples weren’t really welcomed in the academic world of Albany, N.Y. I knew what I was. But I just kept my mouth shut. Thankfully, wearing flannel shirts and jeans was the lesbian wardrobe of choice.

That’s why when I saw Moira/Max enter the world of “The L Word”, I saw a familiar face - a young dyke, unapologetic for the way she appears, whose gender expression is B-U-T-C-H.. I could relate.

Like Moira/Max, my gender expression is male. I dress mostly in men’s clothes. They’re more comfortable, they last longer, and I feel more like me in jeans and a button-down shirt

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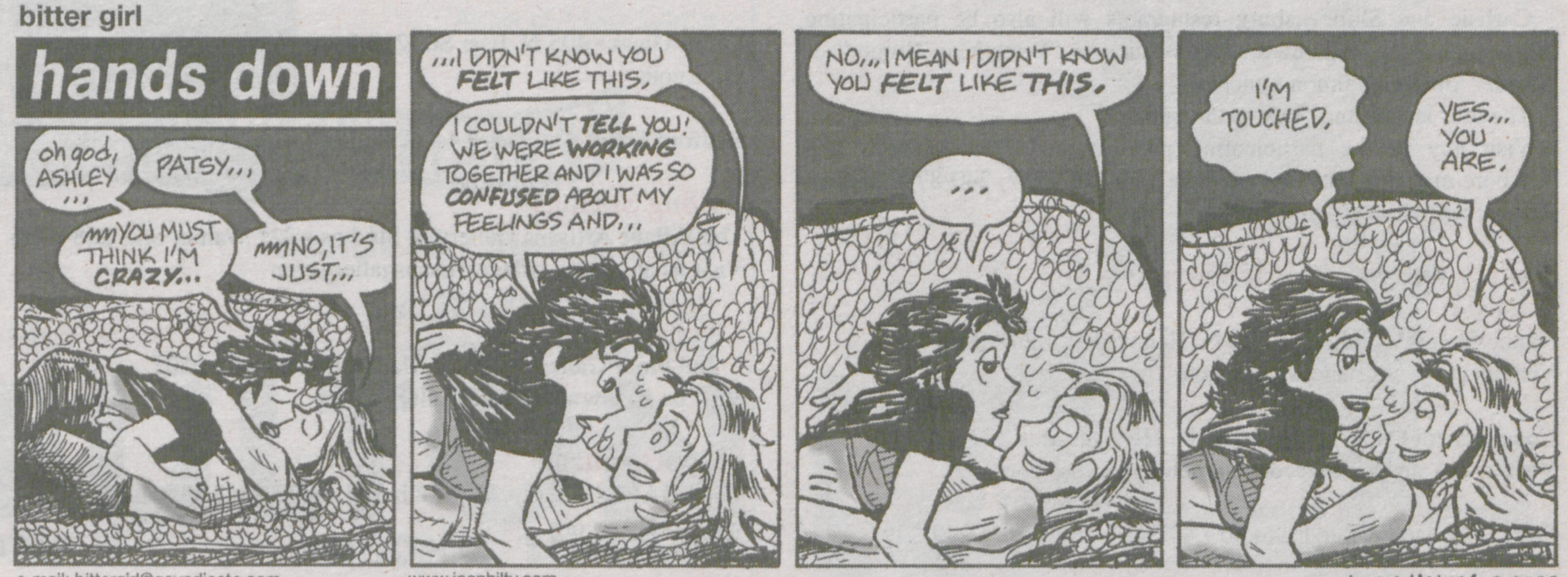
bitter girl


hands down
oh god, ASHLEY ...
PATSY...
mmYOU MUST THINK I'M CRAZY...
mmNO, IT'S JUST...
...I DIDN'T KNOW YOU FELT LIKE THIS,
I COULDN'T TELL YOU! WE WERE WORKING TOGETHER AND I WAS SO CONFUSED ABOUT MY FEELINGS AND...
NO... I MEAN I DIDN'T KNOW YOU FELT LIKE THIS.
...
I'M TOUCHED.
YES... YOU ARE.

e-mail: bittergirl@qsyndicate.com

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Renaissance

Transgendered Education Association
Lower Susquehanna Valley Chapter

Meeting Time: First Saturday each month–8–11p.m.
Location: Metropolitan Community Church–MCC
Address: 2973 Jefferson St. Harrisburg, PA 17110
Cost: $5 donation requested from non-members
Info: Providing a safe space for gender education and caring support for Cross Dressers, Transgendered Individuals (M2F & F2M) and those close to them. Plentiful parking in secure, low-traffic area, close to building. Light refreshments provided. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted inside. Changing area provided for those who need to dress.

March 4, 2006 - Movie & Popcorn Night. “Normal” Will Be Shown.
March 18, 2006 - Spring Fling at Bube’s Brewery - Buffet Dinner & Comedian Karen Gray. Contact Rachel Fischer: rachel_f_ts@yahoo.com or www.renaisancelsv.com for info.
April 1, 2006 - Guest Speaker - Trudy From “Picture Perfect You” Explains Electrolysis vs. Laser

Transgendered 101 Educational Panel Offered for Universities, Businesses, various Organizations and Government Agencies
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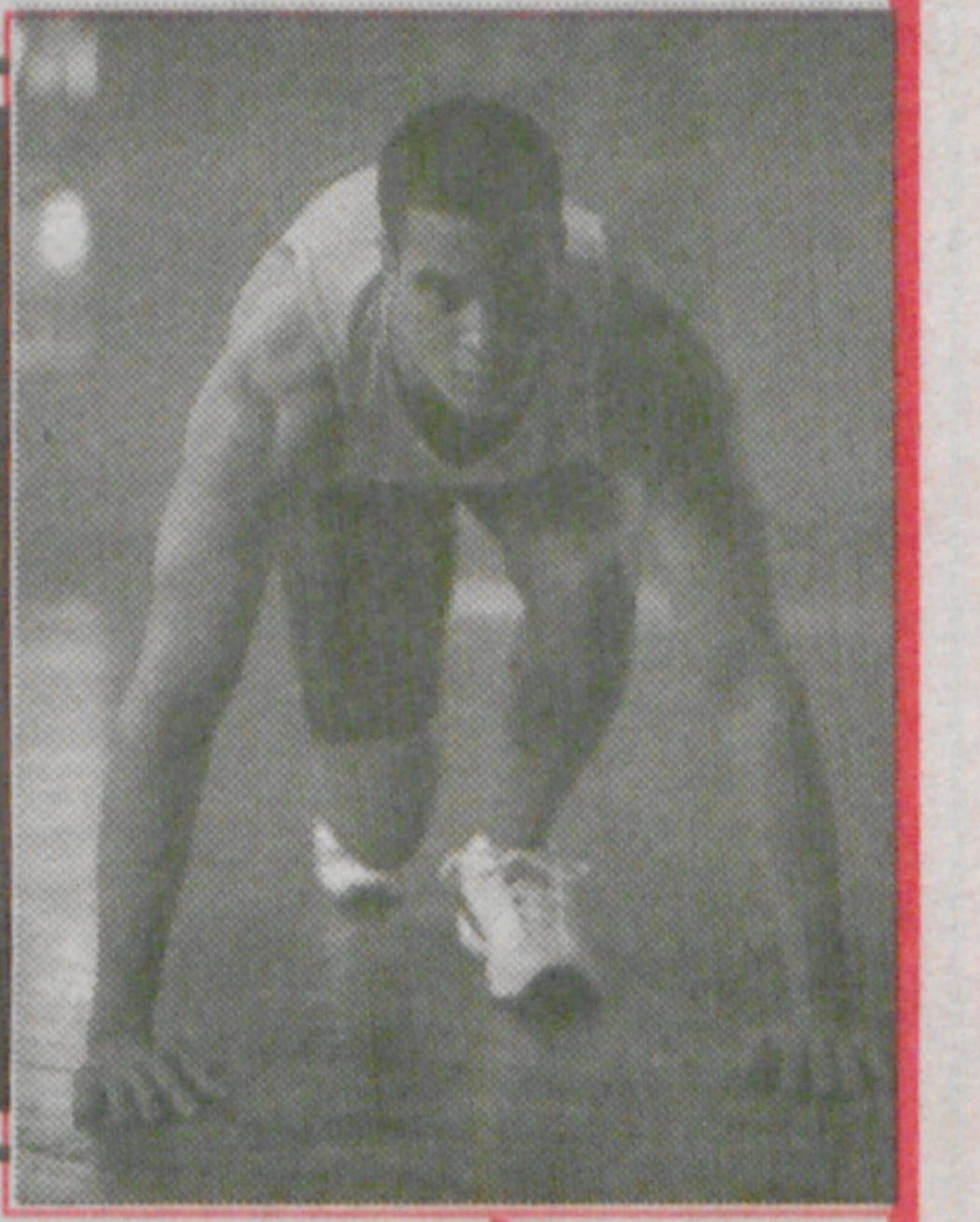

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April 28, 29, & 30

Cumberland Valley: Spring Arts & Antiques Celebration 2006

Come enjoy art, antiques, food and some early days of spring in the Cumberland Valley communities of Carlisle, Boiling Springs, Shippensburg, Mechanicsburg and Summerdale.

The "Cumberland Valley - Spring Arts & Antiques Celebration 2006" is slated for Friday, April 28 and Saturday, April 29 from 10 to 5 p.m., and Sunday, April 30 from noon to 4 p.m.

This years tour theme is "Our Town" with many galleries and studios reflecting their town or area as to subject matter and theme. This annual art gallery, art studio and antique tour is designed to showcase the areas finest artists and master craftspeople, along with their latest creations, as well at well as the areas wonderful antiques.

Carlisle and Shippensburg restaurants will also be participating offering artistically themed specials such as "Peter Max Burger" or "Turner Smoked Salmon Quiche."

The tour is free and open to the public.

Visit any of the participating galleries and studios for a free brochure/map that lists the event sites, or call (717) 240-8747 and we will be happy to mail you one.

Gallery and Studio participants – Carlisle

Nancy Stamm's Galleria • 201 N. Hanover St. • 240-0551
Visit us at - www.nancystamm.com

Consignment Gallery West • 164 N. Hanover St. • 249-9494
Visit us at - www.info@consignmentgalleryusa.com

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Lunch Box continued

serve as honorary co-chairs of the City's newest public art project "62 Area Artists Do Lunch." Sponsored by Friends of Midtown, the project has artists creating art objects from silver aluminum lunch boxes like those carried by generations of school students.

Friends of Midtown president Dave Robertson says, "It's like the cow parade, only smaller and with handles. After our initial foray with artists for Gallery Walk '05, where we put 19 plein air artists on the streets painting midtown, and then produced a very successful gallery show in a space we called 'Rent This Gallery,' we wanted a project that would continue to draw attention to artists and to midtown, as an artist friendly neighborhood."

The 62 lunch boxes will be displayed at businesses, restaurants, and galleries in downtown and midtown during the months of February and March, with pictures and locations listed on the FOM www.friendsofmidtown.org website. Interested businesses and restaurants can contact FOM to secure a lunchbox for display. Then a gallery show will be held in April 2006 in the Tracey

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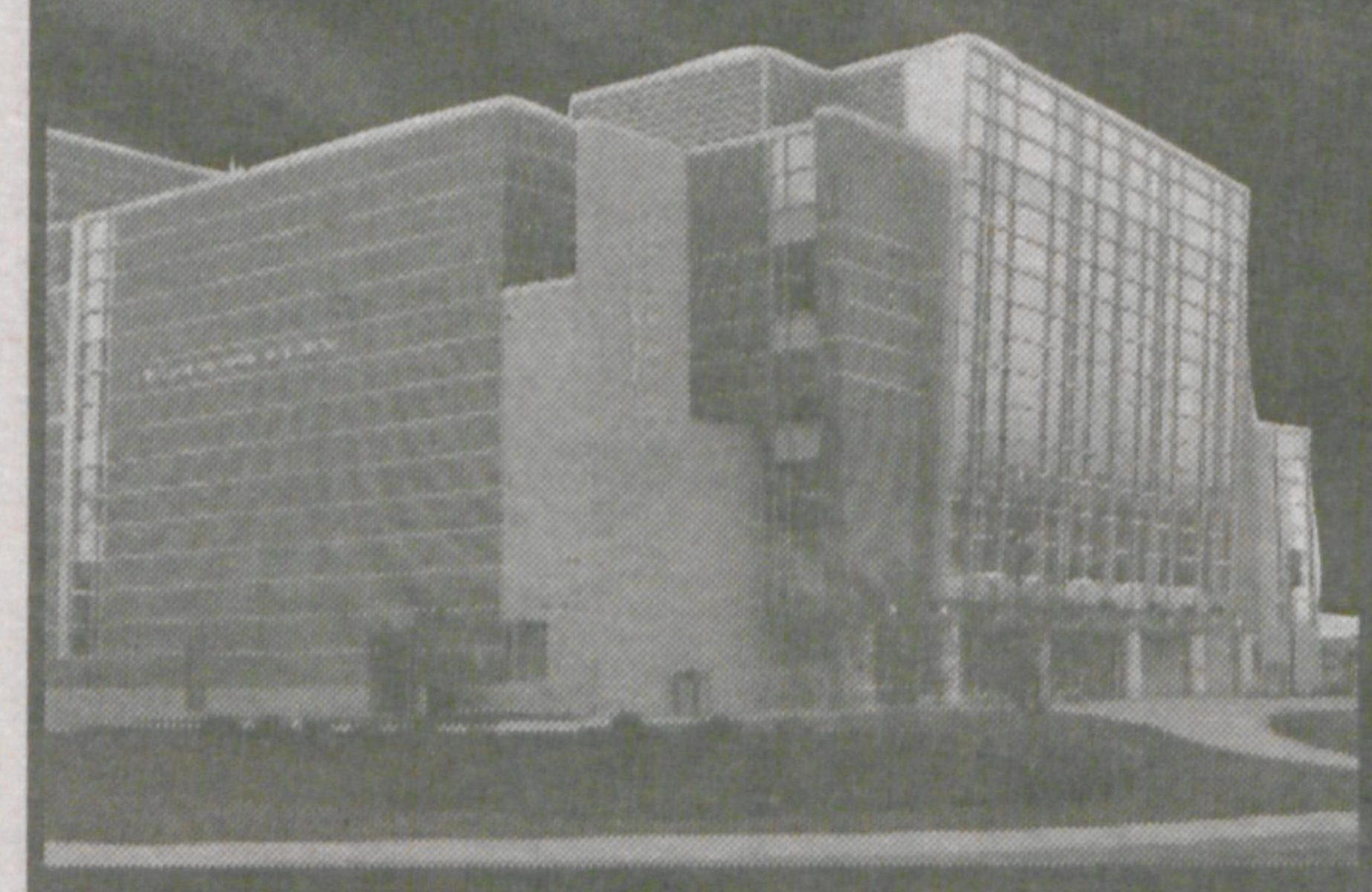

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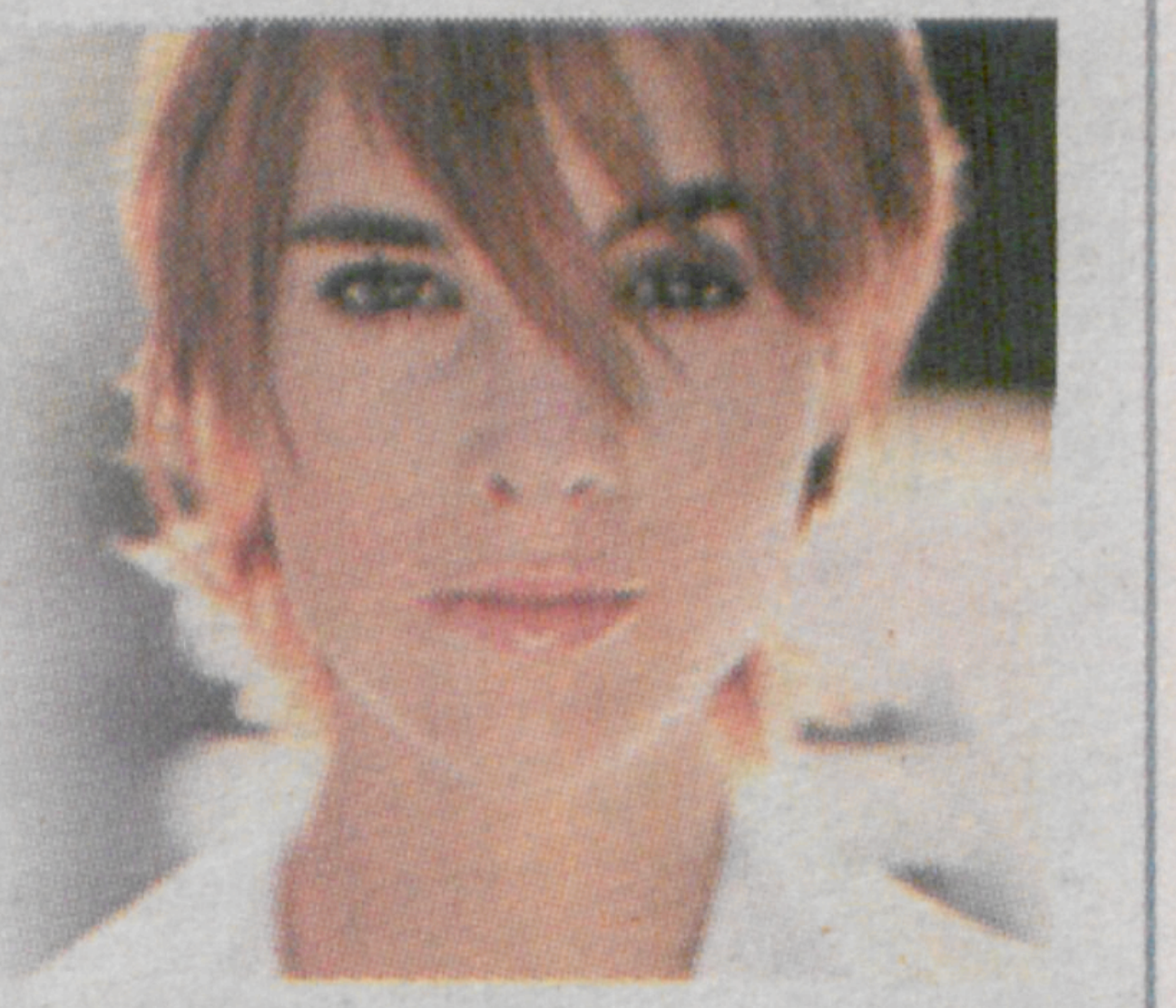

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Lesbian Notions continued

than in women's slacks and a blouse. I always run the risk of being called "sir" - it happened a lot more often when I was younger and thinner. But when I'm wearing a winter coat, with my short hair and deep voice, the person at the cash register has more than once told me to "have a nice day, sir." I smile, say thanks, and think to myself, "I must look like I'm 14, 'cause there ain't no 5 o'clock shadow anywhere on my face."

Like Moira/Max, my gender expression is also butch - and proudly so. I don't buy the "emulating the patriarchy" feminist rhetoric anymore. My politics will always be firmly rooted in feminism, but, from my perspective, being a lesbian means throwing off how society expects us to act and being who we are - butch, femme, androgynous, or somewhere in between.

To be clear, my gender identity - how I think of myself - is not male. I don't identify as a man trapped in a woman's body. All the hints around "The L Word" story line is that Moira/Max does, and that not only is her gender expression male, but her gender identity is as well.

So unlike Moira/Max, I'm not considering transitioning from female to male. I completely understand, however, why Moira/Max would go down that path. For some, being content in redefining who we are as women is enough. For others, it's about feeling like you're in the wrong body. When that's the case, being a lesbian, being butch as you can be, and even packing just simply aren't enough.

When you identify as a transgender person, you're turning all the conventions on their heads. You're saying that your biological make-up is not yours - that your gender identity is the opposite of how you were born. You're saying you're willing to undergo surgery and hormone treatment to bring out the truth of who you really are.

While changing our gender identities are where Max/Moira and I diverge, I have to hand it to the folks behind "The L Word" for tackling this subject.

continued on page 30

LOGO continued

intervention.

Some of the re-runs of gay-themed sitcoms "It's All Relative" may have failed on network TV the first go-round not because of their gayness, but because they weren't that funny in the first place. Noah's Arc, while ground-breaking in showing African-American gay men dealing with love and life, sometimes comes across like the black gay male version of Waiting to Exhale - or worse, The Golden Girls. I do wish Noah would butch it up just an iota with his "straight acting, straight appearing" boyfriend. And please, Noah, stop already with all the clips and barrettes in your hair. Honestly!

CBS News on LOGO

Nonetheless, whether telling us more about the lives of lesbian surfers in Curl Girls or entertaining us with its "3-M" concerts (the M's belonging to Mr. Morrissey, Ms. McLachlan, and Ms. Minogue), or enlightening us with CBS News on LOGO reporting from journalist Jason Bellini, the channel is spot on.

I do wonder with its "something for everyone" approach how LOGO will stay on the air in the long term. I mean, they are appealing to at least one 45-year-old among us; perhaps they were aiming for the younger target audience that advertisers tend to favor. However, you don't have to be a man - or a woman - of a certain age to appreciate LOGO's entertaining, enlightening, and diverse approach to Gay America. See for yourself.

March 17th -
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CINEMA CENTER

www.cinemacenter.com

By Jeremiah Hetes

Here's the skinny on what Hollywood has in store for the big screen during March and April.

Aquamarine (Fox) Release Date: 3/3/06 Rated: PG

AQUAMARINE

"For two best friends who needed a miracle, something magical is about to happen." Against her will, Haley (Jojo) is about to movie to Australia with her mother. After a huge storm, best friends Claire (Emma Roberts) and Haley find Aquamarine (Sara Paxton), a mermaid, in the pool of their beach club. Aquamarine falls in love with Raymond (Jack McDorman) a boy who works at the beach club, and promises to grant the girls a wish in return for their help in dating him. Aquamarine must prove to her father that she is in love for her to become human. "This spring look beneath the surface and believe."

The Hills Have Eyes (FSL) Release Date: 3/10/06 Rated: R

THE HILLS HAVE EYES

Between 1943 and 1992 The United States Government conducted 331 nuclear tests in the desert of New Mexico. Radioactive fallout contaminated and mutated all living things within 1,300 square miles. A newspaper headline reads: "Miners refuse to abandon their lands." In 2005, a family road trip goes terrifyingly awry when travelers become stranded in a government atomic zone. Miles from nowhere, the Carters soon realize the seemingly uninhabited wasteland is actually the breeding ground of a blood thirsty mutant family... and they are the Prey!!

V for Vendetta (WB) Release Date: 3/17/06 Rated: R

V FOR VENDETTA

Set against the futuristic landscape of totalitarian Britain, the story of a mild mannered young woman named Evey who is rescued from a life-and-death situation by a masked vigilante know only as "V." Remarkably and ferociously skilled in the art of combat and deception, V urges his fellow citizens to rise up against tyranny and oppression. As Evey uncovers the truth about V's mysterious background, she also discovers the truth about herself. Evey becomes prisoner of the despotic government and is threatened with death unless she tells the whereabouts and the identity of the mysterious man named V. "People should not be afraid of their government. Governments should be afraid of their people," says V.

Ice Age 2: The Meltdown (Fox) Release Date: 3/31/06 Rated: Note yet rated

Our story starts out with Scrat, the ever persistent squirrel chasing after a nut. The nut falls into a lake populated by prehistoric fish, all trying to eat the nut and the squirrel who manages to escape, but when one ferocious fish bites his nut, Scrat uses ninja movies to dispatch the fish. The Ice Age is coming to and end, and the animals are delighting in the melting paradise that is their new world. Manny, Sid, and Diego quickly learn that the warming climate has one major drawback: a huge glacial dam is about to break, threatening the entire valley. The only chance of survival lies at the other end of the valley. So the three heroes, along with a mammoth names Ellie embark on a journey to warn everyone and figure out a way to escape the coming deluge.

Before I leave you, here is another tidbit of information, be sure to watch the 78th Academy Awards on Sunday March 5th, 2006 on ABC at 5 pm PST, to see some of our great movies, actors and directors receive credit for their hard work. Several movies such as Brokeback Mountain, Capote, Good Night and Good Luck as well as Munich are up for best picture. Well I must go for now, but I will have more movie news for you next issue, and until then, I hope to see you at the movies!

Milford & Pike County Gay Getaway

2000 US Census: Pike County 2nd Highest PA Same-Sex Households & GLBT-owned Business

By Winnie McCroy
NYC Correspondent

Nestled between the Poconos and the Catskills is the best-kept secret in gay getaways, beautiful Milford, PA. Located in Pike Country on the banks of the upper Delaware River, this charming little town is only 75 miles from New York City, and 2.5 hours from Harrisburg.

According to the 2000 census, Pike County had the second-highest concentration of same-sex households and recently opened glbt-owned businesses of any county in Pennsylvania.

Milford has been a resort town since the mid-19th century, but escaped a massive influx of vacationers due to geographic isolation. "It was a huge resort community, which also has a bearing on today, but tourism has been the primary economy here for more than 170 years," said Sean Strub, Milford's biggest cheerleader, former publisher of POZ Magazine and a local landowner. "So even the people who were born and bred here have a family legacy of dealing with outsiders and tourists, which I think contributes to a certain kind of tolerance to people who are different."

JFK

In 1963 President Kennedy announced that a dam would be built between the Poconos and Milford. The project stirred up intense hostility over the next decade as the government forced residents to give up the 70,000 acres of land bordering the river. It was eventually reallocated to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation, which acted like a rock in the stream, diverting currents of tourists around the town. Milford was even difficult for drivers to reach until the last spur of I-84 was built in the '30s, after years of legal battles with a hunting club that owned the land.

Gifford Pinchot Heritage

These days, if you are looking for a country escape, Milford is the place to be. In fact, that's the very history of this town. The Pinchot family, Bonapartists involved in a plot to free Napoleon from exile, were largely behind the creation of Milford. Forced to leave France in a hurry, they moved in 1815 to the sleepy Pennsylvania burg, where they moved in joined the timber business. "I like to say they came up the river with a paddle," joked Strub.

PA Governor Gifford Pinchot was the first scientifically educated forester, founding the Yale Forestry School, working with famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted who designed Central Park, corresponding with President Theodore Roosevelt and cementing Milford's reputation as "the birthplace of the American conservation movement." His legacy is: "The greatest good for the greatest number for the greatest amount of time."

Grey Towers Landmark

The Pinchot's estate, Grey Towers National Historic Landmark, is one of Milford's popular attractions. Beautifully landscaped grounds surround a lavish, gabled house with newly restored slate roofs. Grey Towers was an international salon of the 19th century, with the Pinchots hosting literary types who would dine alfresco in the summertime at the legendary Fingerbowl, an outdoor dinner table of sorts, where food was floated on balsa wood platters. The family eventually donated the house as a retreat location for the U.S. Forest Service in 1963, the organization that Gifford Pinchot created in 1898.

Raymondskill Falls & Eagle Institute

Milford is famed for its outdoor recreational activities, including miles of hiking trails like those along the Raymondskill Falls, one of the largest waterfalls in Pennsylvania. Milford also has one of the largest bald eagle nesting areas, fed by the plethora of salamanders and insects that also sustain the large bat population. In the early days, Milford's summer resort business boomed over their claim to fame that they had "no insects of any kind." The Eagle Institute is headquartered in this area.

Hollywood Bigwigs

The early film industry was centered in New York. The studios were in New Jersey, but when directors needed to shoot on location, they came to Milford. Director D.W. Griffith brought many silent film stars including John Barrymore, Mary Pickford, Sarah Bernhard, and the Gish sisters to the area to shoot flicks including "The Perils of Pauline." Legend has it that a young Charlie Chaplin even stayed in the legendary Hotel Fauchere, the posh getaway of the day currently being restored by Strub (see "Legendary Hotel Fauchere Readies to Re-open").

Grey Towers National Historic Landmark

More recently, the Mark Christopher film "Pizza" was filmed on location in Milford. Strub said the new Pike County Film Commission is posting potential film locations in Milford to draw business.

Forest Hall Antiques

Right in the middle of town on Broad Street visitors will find Milford's famed antique shops.

Partners Reggie Cheong-Leen and Peter Spielhagen bought Forest Hall Antiques almost 20 years ago, when, as Cheong-Leen recalls, "the only other gay couple we knew were Jim and Gerry, who had just bought the Dimmick Inn diagonally across from our building. Now we know many gay couples who have weekend homes, or even live out here full time." The couple rents out the bottom of this historic stone building to a beauty shop, frame shop, art gallery and high-end knitting shop, plus Upriver Home Antiques, where you'll find modern home décor.

70NW International Photography

In the building next door Patrick T. Sellitto exhibits and sells the work of avant-garde and contemporary photographers at 70NW International Photography Gallery and Education Center. Across the street, the salumeria Fretta's is a Little Italy transplant featuring salamis, olives, cheeses, and everything you need for an authentic Italian picnic.

Work's Frame Shop & Massage

Couples like frame shop owner Jean Work and her partner massage therapist Nancy Isola have lived in the area for almost eight years. Work said, "We started camping in the area, and found people who lived here to be very friendly, and we started looking for property. It was a total shift, because when we moved out here we had no idea that the area was gay friendly. But Sean was instrùmental in marketing the place as gay friendly, and brought a lot of people to the area." Work's Frame Shop currently operates from the basement of their home with Jean's wares shown in Carolann's Linen Closet in town. (Worksframeshop.com.)

Black Bear Film Festival

The annual Black Bear Film Festival proved the town is hungering for this culture. The festival started in 2000 with the mission to "support and promote innovative, independent film," and in the very first year, every showing sold out.

The film selections, last year's including "Howl's Moving Castle" and the documentary "Grizzly Man," were soon supplemented by an array of parties, free screenings and related events. The Black Bear Film Fest is an annual October event; for complete info, visit

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Real Estate

Active community participation is forcing real estate prices to rise quickly. In town, you can still find small lots for $65,000, with small Victorians going for about $200,000, and 10,000-sq. ft. plantation-style lots going for about $995,000. Nearby Matamoras, a river town that Strub called "a sleeping giant" has houses at about half the cost of Milford, and is just beginning to see some renewal.

Roy B. Hull-Century 21

Ed Raarup, Roy B. Hull-Century 21, and his life partner, Scott Eck, bought land in 1993. "By 1995, we'd moved here full time," Raarup says. He doesn't believe he's ever been in a town "where you are as welcome and encouraged" to speak your mind, express yourself, and "make a contribution" no matter who you are.

After a successful Broadway and touring career, Eck applied his architectural design skills to local projects. Raarup serves on the local planning commission and the architectural review board. "People can really make a difference here," Raarup says.

GMAC Mortage

Making a difference is what GMAC Mortage specialist Susan Hines enjoys about her Milford experience. With real estate licenses in PA, NJ, and NY, she's poised to assist with "fast-track" deals. "My typical client, many from Broadway and the entertainment world, have special needs we can meet," she explains. Often Hines helps those keeping a small apartment in Manhattan find suitable real estate in Pike County. "I often close deals in three to four weeks," she says.

With a 500- name client base, Hines offers first loan, equity lines, and refinancing services. "I've enjoyed visiting the Gay & Lesbian Business Expo at the Javits Center" in order to properly understand her market," Hines says.

Porn Star Thought So

The affordable real estate prices attracted many city folks, including porn star Aiden Shaw, who bought a house across from the Old Lumberyard Shops and sold it two years later at tremendous profit, and designer Todd Oldham, who has a tree house-style dwelling 60-ft. up a tree in nearby Shohola.

Old Lumberyard Antiques

Strub's sister Missi has an impressive collection of antiques for sale at the Old Lumberyard Antiques, across from Nellie's Naturals, the local health food store owned by Cindy Shreyer, a former pro golfer, and her partner Karen Nell.

The couple came up from Connecticut in response to an ad in a trade magazine, and immediately had a good feel about the place. They have even opened a café, Nervous Nellie's, across from their health food store. Nell said the café will serve organic foods, hold a Himalayan drum circle, a chick flick night, and guest speakers.Just down the street from the Old Lumberyard Shops are some of Milford's most popular B&Bs like The Muir House. (see "The Muir House: "We love being hospitable.")

Dimmick Inn & Steakhouse

Back on the town's main street, the Dimmick Inn and Steakhouse on Harford Street has served as a landmark since it opened in 1828. Co-owner Gerry Hansen was even at one point elected as an openly gay candidate of the County Commission. http://dimmickinn.com

Black Walnut Inn

For those seeking a B&B type getaway, The Black Walnut Inn is a cozy, 12-room farmhouse located on a wooded estate not far from I-84. Host William Jara welcomes gays and lesbians to enjoy the country breakfast, private, four-acre pond and nightly hot cocoa and freshly baked cookies in front of a roaring fire.

Jara and his wife, Robin, have been managing the facility for the last six years. One of the Inn's best features is the historic Italian Marble fire place dating back to General Sherman. "We have farm animals, paddle boats, catch and release fishing, trail rides and lots and lots of wild life," Jara says. The Inn is great for those tired of commercial hotels. You can even board your horse here. 570-296-6322 or www.theblackwalnutinn.com

Blue Sky Red Earth Tribal Arts

Further down on Harford Street sits the old schoolhouse building, where Stella from Blue Sky Red Earth Tribal Arts invited us to peruse the wide variety of Native American jewelry, clothing and art. Andrea Filone, our host at Mt. Haven Resort, remembered attending first and second grade at this charming stone schoolhouse, which now also houses the Milford Magazine offices, Joey's Pizza and the Drivers' License Bureau.

Mt. Haven Resort

Mt. Haven Resort, outside of town on Log Tavern Road, is situated on more than 400 acres of land next to a horse farm. The Filone family balances relaxing country vacationing with luxury, as seen in the many choices of private rooms with Jacuzzis and fireplaces. Inside the Garden and Skylight Room, multiple fireplaces and wood stoves impart a cozy feel where you can indulge in the lavish Sunday brunch, which features a craft-your-own-omelet bar, breakfast meats including homemade sausage, Belgian waffles, a wide variety of pastries, fresh fruit, hash browns and more.

Filone, who is a wedding officiate, said that Mt. Haven has a huge old mansion perfect for weddings, and an enclosed gazebo perfect for smaller commitment ceremonies. The resort fills up quickly, but can easily accommodate an entire wedding party and guests. www.mthavenresort.com, 800-553-1530.

The Best Western Inn, Hunt's Landing Perfect for families is The Best Western Inn at Hunt's Landing in nearby Matamoras. General Manager Nick Moore was instrumental in getting the Pike County Visitor's Bureau off the ground.

The Inn offers free breakfast, a tropical indoor pool, on-site fishing, and canoeing and kayaking on the Upper

The Muir House:

"We love being hospitable."

The Muir House, owned by Dale Dalman, is a charming B&B located where the Sawkill Stream and Sloat Brook meet. In addition to its antique-furnished guestrooms and romantic atmosphere, The Muir House is renowned for its sophisticated cuisine, designer martinis and live music on weekends.

"We love being hospitable to all our guests," says Johnny Miele, in charge of overall operations. Originally from Brooklyn, Miele's parents had a summer home in Milford.

He's also the Pastry Chef. "I have my hands in everything," he says, as if he's anxious to get right back to making a guest smile. Lately, the kitchen's Roast Half Duck with a Cherry Glaze has been the rage. "I make a killer cheese cake with strawberries and Bailey's Irish Cream," Miele adds.

Jazz pianist and singer extraordinaire Donna Antonow plays every Friday. Muir House recently added a "Martini & Smoking Room" where guests can lounge before dinner.

www.muirhouse.com

Le Gorille: Where the Food is Brilliant

By Winnie McCroy
NYC Correspondent

On advice of several locals, we left Milford one evening for dinner in nearby Shohola at Le Gorille, described as the best restaurant around.

Several years ago, owners Peter and Sharon Daniel took over the restaurant and made the 10-table bistro a whopping hit. The couple runs the restaurant virtually unassisted, with self-trained chef Peter cooking, and his wife Sharon preparing pastries and waiting tables.

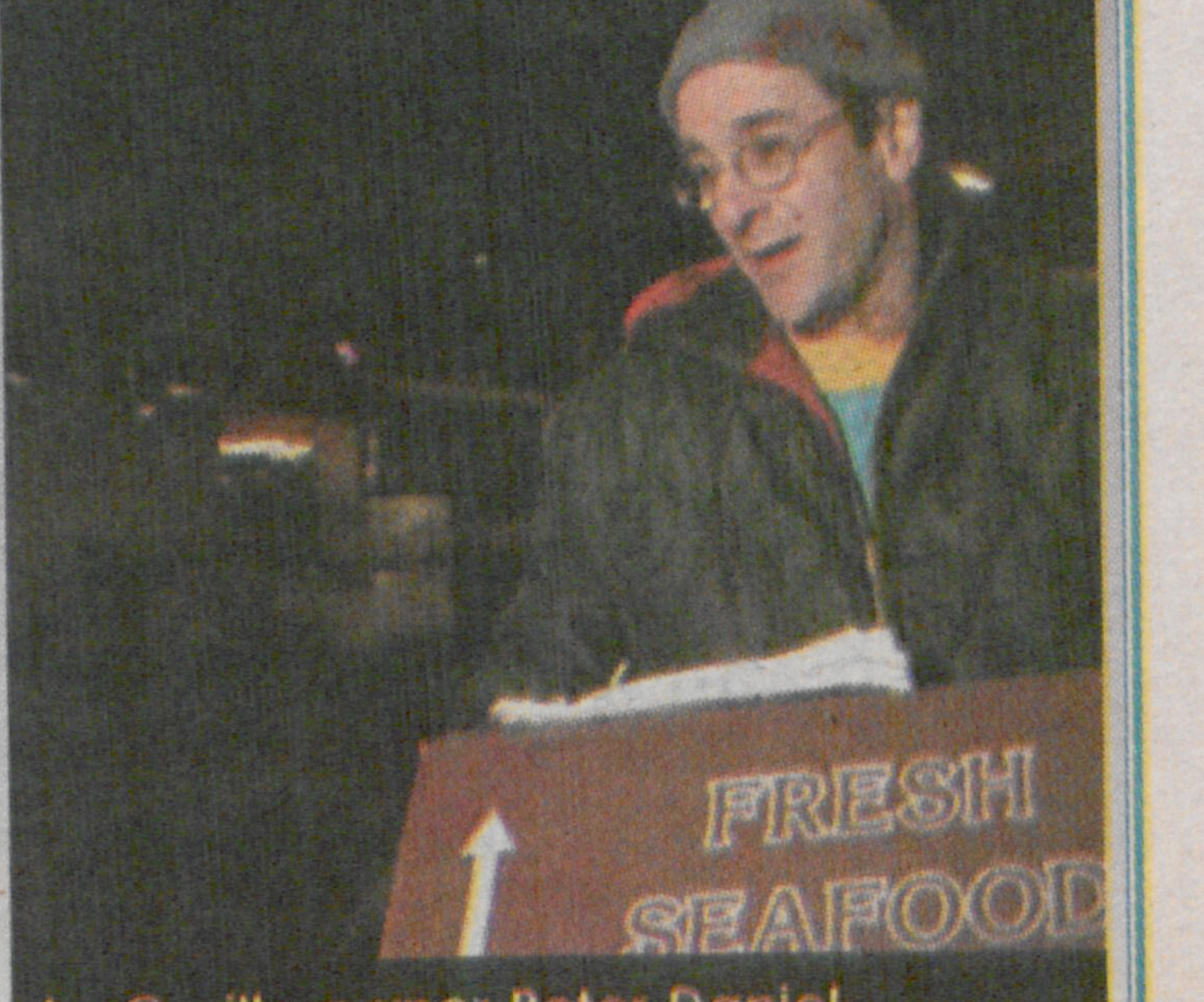
Out of their tiny kitchen came delicious dishes like Prince Edward mussels with lemon, garlic and white wine, and roasted portabella mushrooms with eggplant, goat cheese, and roasted red pepper.

While our food was being prepared, Sharon served cocktails in the front room, where we mingled with a table of gay men and some folks I'd met earlier that day in an antique shop in Milford.

When our entrees arrived, we were amazed at the marinated tenderness of the grilled Black Angus Hangar steak with garlic mashed potatoes. Peter's early-morning trips to the new Hunts Point Fish Market in the Bronx really paid off: the potato-crusted salmon was succulent, and the sautéed red snapper with shrimp and bok choy was fresh and moist. The sweetness of the accompanying jasmine rice cake, made with coconut milk, was a nice contrast to the snapper.

The menu offered six tasty appetizers, a soup - that evenings' was a sublime garlic soup - and 10 entrees, from calves liver with pancetta to filet mignon with a bleu cheese crust.

For dessert, we tried the warm bread pudding with caramel sauce, an apple walnut torte, and the Almond Dacquoise, a layered dessert with flaky pastry between almond meringue. These toothsome treats were well worth the indulgence.



Le Gorille owner Peter Daniel

Delaware River. Pets are allowed, and children 12 and under stay free. The Inn's restaurant offers a weekend all-you-can-eat lobster roast that is popular among visitors and locals alike. 570-491-2400 or http://book.bestwestern.com

Le Gorille

On the referral of several locals, we forayed out of Milford one evening to nearby Shohola for dinner at Le Gorille, described as the best restaurant around. Several years ago, owners Peter and Sharo Daniel took over the restaurant, which had been operating as Le Gorille for 20 years. (See "Le Gorille: Where the Food is Brilliant")

Walk the Dogs

After sampling scrumptious foods and treats in Milford and surrounding restaurants, the next day visitors can always "work it off" by walking (take the dogs) for a hike along one of Milford's many rivers, which teem with waterfalls.

For scenic beauty, the town of Milford is unparalleled. Something for everyone: Antiques, old movie history, and friendly people. The locals are unfailingly generous, stopping for pedestrians to cross the street, eagerly offering directions to the many local attractions, and basically ensuring that your family will feel welcome.

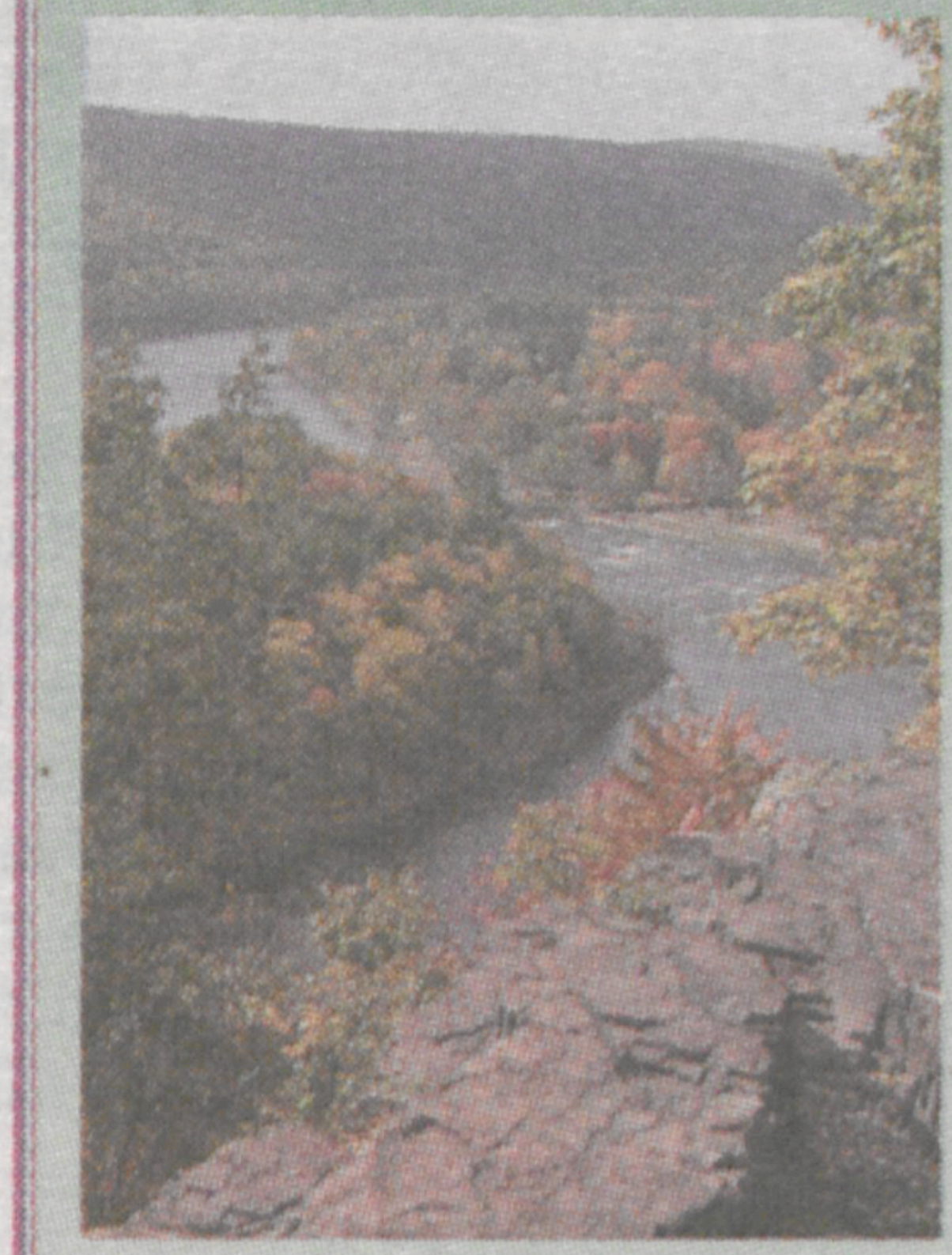
Spring House Commons

The Spring House Commons is a freshly renovated 1800's boarding house located in Western Sullivan County, in Barryville New York. The Commons is located on the Upper Delaware River off Route 97, which has recently been designated as the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway.

In its prime, the Upper Delaware River area was a mecca for retreating from city life. John F. Kennedy, Bette Davis, Charles Lindburgh and Paul Newman are but a few of the celebrities who have been to the area.

The Commons was a very popular boarding house during the Sullivan County heyday, the early 20th Century. The house served as a resort/room and board for tourists and Erie railroad personnel. The facility is now fully renovated (8 unit) property with studio, loft, one and two bedroom spaces located just under 2 hours of New York City by car, train or bus. Each space may be used residentially or commercially.

Ecce B&B: "I've never seen a more spectacular view."



Ecce B&B (pronounced et chay) is Latin for "behold". This newly renovated mountain house is perched on a bluff 300 feet above the Upper Delaware River. Ecce is an award winning five bedroom B&B, situated on 60 wooded acres located in the southwest Catskills region. Their finely appointed rooms have private baths (some with whirlpool tubs), A/C, in-room televisions, refreshment centers, Internet access and a DVD/VCR/CD player. Panoramic views of the river valley and the surrounding mountain ranges of Pennsylvania and New York can be seen from nearly all the rooms in the house. A wood burning fireplace graces the living room to create a warm and friendly atmosphere.

The New York Post said: "Be sure to behold the breakfast."The Wall Street Journal Arts Critic Terry Teachout said: "I've never seen a more spectacular view." The Discerning Traveler said: "On the terrace you get the full "Wow" impact with the river stretching for miles in both directions." The Times Herald Record said: "I'm suffering from a severe case of Ecce envy. All you need to do is spend a moment at Ecce B&B to understand why." www.eccebedand-breakfast.com

"On the terrace you get the full "Wow" impact with the river stretching for miles in both directions."
-The Discerning Traveler-

"For once, the Web site understates the case…I've never seen a more spectacular view."
-Terry Teachout / Art Critic -
The Wall Street Journal-

"'The Coolness Factor' comes into play when you see a place for the first time and just know in your heart you have ridden into something very special. ECCE is one of those places."
-Backroads Magazine-

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"I'm suffering from a severe case of ECCE envy. All you need do is spend but a moment at ECCE B & B in Barryville to understand why."
-Times-Herald Record-

"ECCE" is Latin for "behold", and the ECCE B & B in Barryville suits its name - it's on 60 acres of rocky bluff 300 feet above a gorgeous bend in the Delaware. Be sure to behold the breakfast."
-New York Post-

"Truly a Site to Behold"
-The River Reporter-

Culinary Destination

Legendary Hotel Fauchere Readies to Re-open

By Winnie McCroy
NYC Correspondent

Five years ago, Milford residents Sean Strub and Richard Snyder bought the legendary Hotel Fauchere, intent upon an historic renovation and reopening of the classic Italianate structure on Milford's main street, across the street from the Pike County Courthouse. This spring, their dream will be realized, as the Hotel Fauchere is unveiled as a 16-room luxury boutique hotel, with a "culinary destination" restaurant, corporate meeting and event facilities and a casual restaurant/nightclub with live entertainment.

"The Hotel Fauchere was opened in 1852 and run by the Fauchere family for 125 years until 1977," said Strub. "In its day it was vastly more famous than Milford itself. We have old guest book registries with Carnegies and Rockefellers, Henry Ford, composer Franz Liszt, Jr., Pearl White (of Perils of Pauline fame), and many silent film stars. D.W. Griffith made two of his first movies in Milford. Three US Presidents have been guests of the Fauchere - Kennedy and both Roosevelts - as well as General William Tecumseh Sherman, Sarah Bernhardt, Ogden Nash, Robert Frost, the Gish sisters and many others."

Louis Fauchere was a Swiss-born French-speaking master chef at the world-famous Delmonico's restaurant in New York. He opened the Fauchere as a summer hotel and, because of the quality of his cuisine, brought his elite New York clientele with him to the bucolic country outpost.

The Hotel Fauchere was also a hot spot during the silent film era, when film companies from New York came to Milford to shoot on location. Strub said the Fauchere family gave him an old photo taken outside the hotel featuring Louis Fauchere's son-in-law Warren Chol, a neighbor, and Charlie Chaplin. Strub sent it to the Chaplin archives in Paris, who said they had no record of the star ever being in Milford. But Strub added, "Last summer I was out at the Sundance Theater Lab, in Utah, reading a local magazine and it had a picture of a young Charlie Chaplin. I tore it out and brought it home to compare it to the old photograph we have of him at the Fauchere. I think it is him."

Strub said they will keep the luxury that made the Hotel Fauchere famous when they reopen it this spring as "a 16-room boutique luxury hotel. Not a bed and breakfast but with the feel of an old-fashioned, family-run, European hotel."

"We've undertaken the restoration as an honor and a big responsibility. We want to serve the hotel and the Fauchere family's legacy appropriately", said Strub. According to Strub, the hotel's main building was built in 1880. The original building was moved to the back and subsequently torn down.

Strub said he reused as much of the original historic fabric - including flooring, doors, moldings, marble floors and beadboard ceilings - as possible. The originalwide-plank wood floors are smooth as butter, and workers have taken pains to restore and extend the original cut marble floor. The hardware is heavy and impressive, with four heavy brass hinges on each door instead of the customary three. Moroccan tiles line the informal guest area, and pineapple motifs offer a traditional symbol of welcoming.

Strub had to recreate part of the stair rail, but the smooth, new mahogany and walnut is indistinguishable from the old. The wide hallway remains a testament to the luxurious use of space. Each room is individually temperature-controlled, and the carrera marble and bluestone bathrooms have radiant heat in the floors, heated towel racks, and other luxury amenities.

"I love this room because you get such a sense of the town. That's what they call the Knob there, and this is Foster Hill over here," said Strub, pointing out a front room window towards the 70,000 acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, which abuts Milford to the south. In back of the hotel there will be an enclosed garden and event space with an antique Victorian "wedding cake" style fountain.

"We want the Fauchere name to be synonymous with

continued on next page

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quality," said Strub. In the culinary tradition for which the Hotel Fauchere is known, there will be a formal dining room upstairs, and a casual bar and lounge downstairs in the space that Mt. Haven's Andrea Filone said once housed a hotspot called The Chicken and Snail Bar.

Strub showed how the downstairs space was extended past the footprint of the hotel by lifting the entire building onto steel support beams and digging down a bit more to give the ceilings height. When you enter the lounge, a long bar will line one side and a row of booths occupy the other, all hung with photographs by artist Christopher Makos, whom Andy Warhol was referred to as "the most modern photographer in America". An exposed brick wall backs a small stage for cabaret performance and other live entertainment.

The two restaurants share a kitchen and are connected by a service stair through the kitchen and scullery, plus a large tunnel to the building next door, which will serve as a corporate meeting and event facility."Staff can go back and forth without being seen, which is important because at this level of facility, we want the service to be as invisible as possible," said Strub.

Also in the basement is the mechanical works of the building, which Strub admits fascinates him. "It is like being in the hull of a ship or submarine, with all these pipes and mechanical systems. This is a circulating pump, so that guests in the room will get hot water immediately upon turning on the tap, instead of having to wait for it to run," he said.

The hotel will have a few antiques, but not many because, as Strub put it, "It's not another frilly Victorian bed and breakfast; we're seeking a more timeless andcontemporary style."

A number of well-known, New York-based designers and architects have participated in the hotels' rebirth. Robert Marinelli designed much of the furniture, and two different design teams are responsible for most of the interiors work. The guest rooms are by Marco Pasanella of the Polenta Group and the public spaces are by Kureck/Jones. Bar Louis's design was a collaboration between photographer Makos, Strub and architect Billy Reue. Steven Harris Architects designed the renovation of the building. The finished product is sure to usher in a new century of opulence for the Hotel Fauchere.

Harrisburg's Neil Choquette Designs for Restored Hotel Fauchere

Artisan Neil Choquette, who has a shop at 421 N. 2nd Street, Harrisburg, 717-319-0232, has been selected by Hotel Fauchere to design and manufacture the banquettes in Bar Louis, one of the restaurants at the Hotel Fauchere complex. Bar Louis will feature photography by Andy Warhol protégé Christopher Makos, who is another member of the Bar Louis design team, along with architect Billy Reue and Fauchere co-owner Sean Strub.

"The owners of the Fauchere wanted top quality work and, where possible, preferred to deal with Pennsylvania craftsmen and artisans. All the mill work and actual manufacturing for the 24 banquettes will be done at my shop here in Harrisburg," Choquette says.. "I'm covering them in a premium ultra-suede, to compliment the exotic wood-paneled interior and Christopher Makos' artwork.

While in Harrisburg one day for a meeting, Strub walked past Choquette's shop and admired his work. "Neil's' work demonstrated a superior design aesthetic and the kind of attention to detail and quality we required. I'm delighted to have him as part of our team," Strub said.

421
NEIL CHOQUETTE

Harrisburg's Neil Choquette, 421 N. 2nd St., is designing 24 banquettes for Milford's historic Hotel Fauchere.

"Food is our common ground, a universal experience." –James Beard

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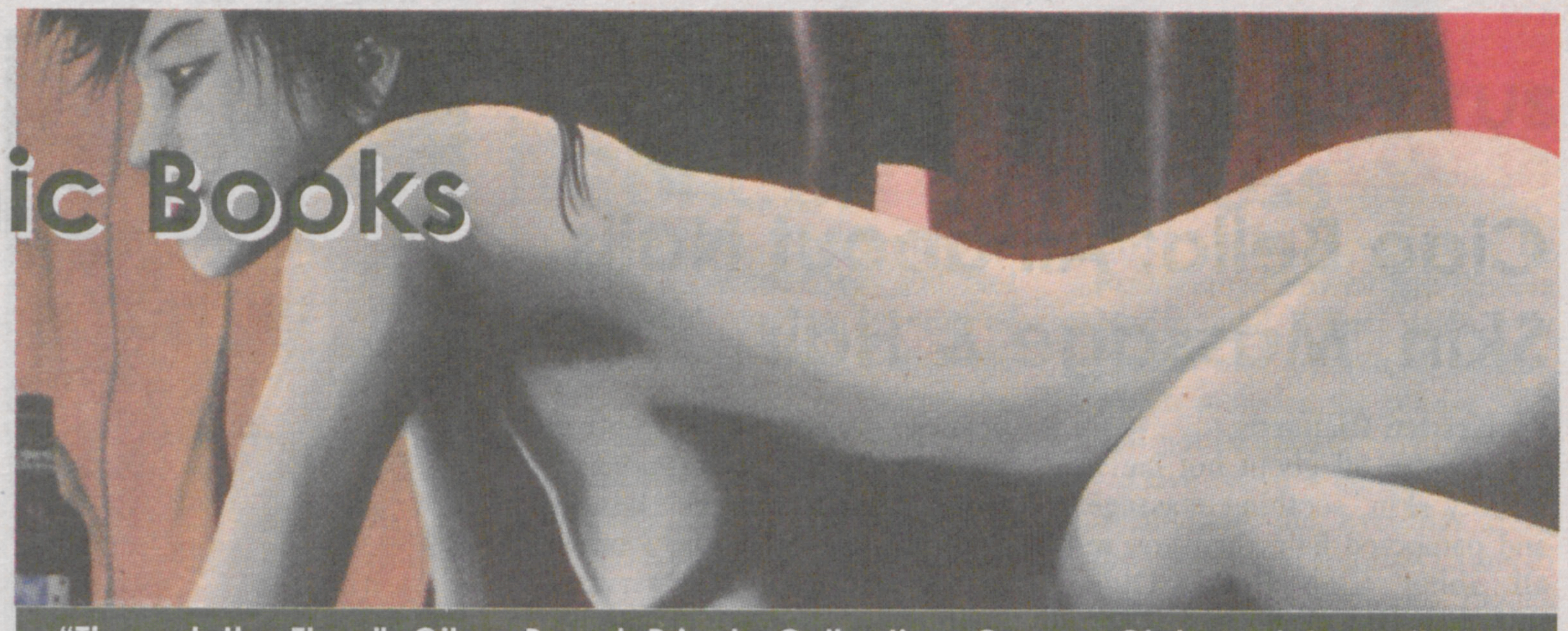
Artist Martin Velez Influenced by Comic Books


"Through the Floor" Oil on Board. Private Collection. Canvas Giclee prints available.

Like the artist known as Prince, artist Martin Velez goes by "Martin." He began with "comic book" art.

Q: Where there any special comic books or characters that influenced you as a boy?

A: There were a lot of characters that influenced me, however I found it more rewarding to create my own characters which is what I did most of the time. I always felt close to Peter Parker and his alter ego Spiderman (mostly because he was so secretive with his family and friends). Peter Parker always had a lot of pressure on him especially from his peers. I related to that in some way because my pressures came from my father, my friends and my teachers. I just wanted to be a kid and have fun. Because of the fact that comic book art was very discouraged in my house, I had to sneak artwork in and out of the house.

Q: Did graffiti, at first, satisfy a "rage" rather than an "artistic" yearning?

A: Oh definitely a rage because when I first started with graffiti I felt as if there was a void in my life. Having been abandoned by my mother, physically abused by my father, and having him die when I was only 15 years old was difficult; I was pissed at the world. Having an outlet, any outlet was a cry for help and graffiti allowed me to be angry and portray it in a chromatic way. Although Graffiti at the time was notorious for its rebellious meaning, I saw it as a way to express the feelings in my life.

I would paint my name with cracks and chunks of letters falling off the image, and sometimes with cracks depicted throughout the entire piece of artwork- almost indicating to the world that despite this may be well done, my life was

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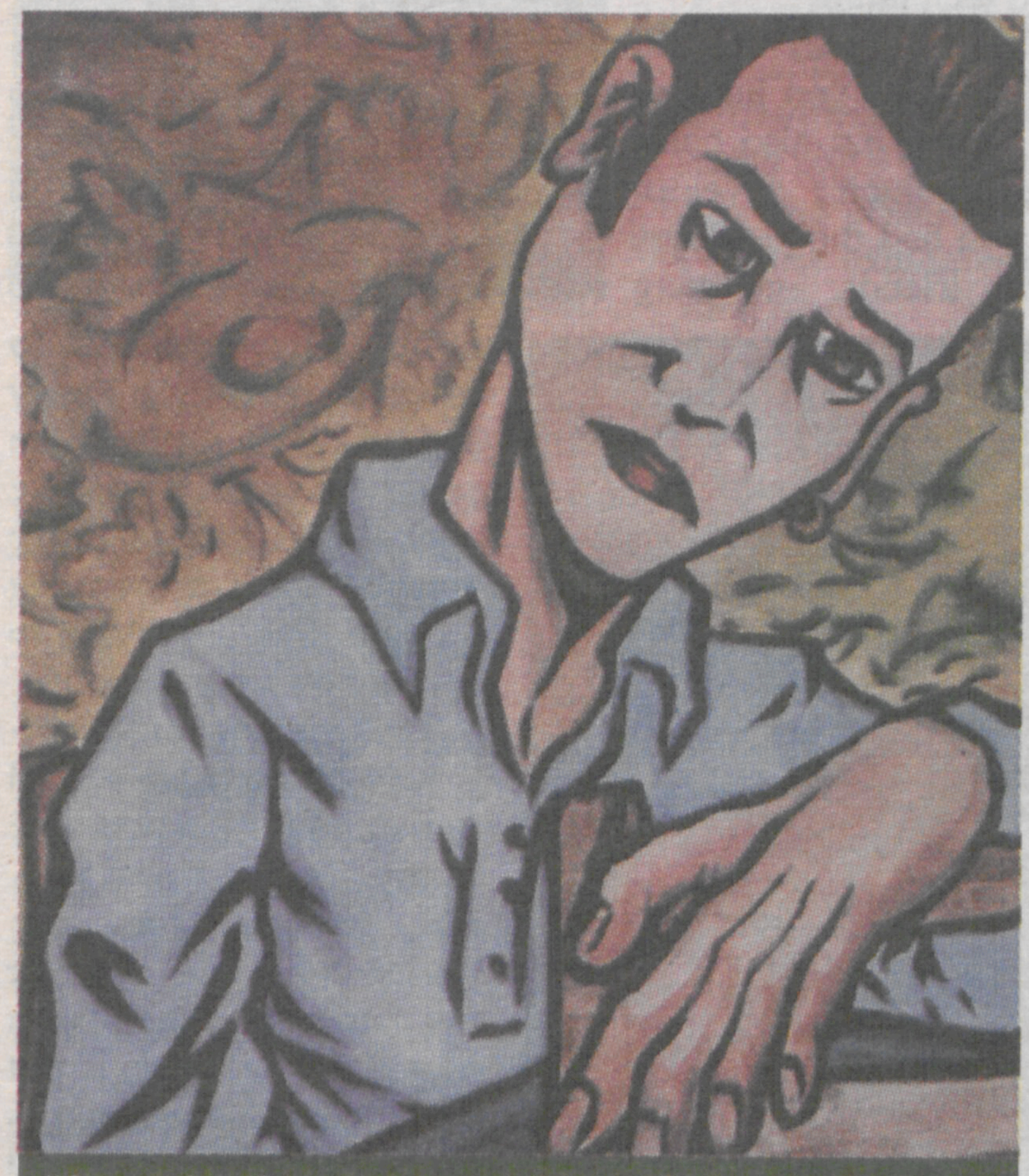
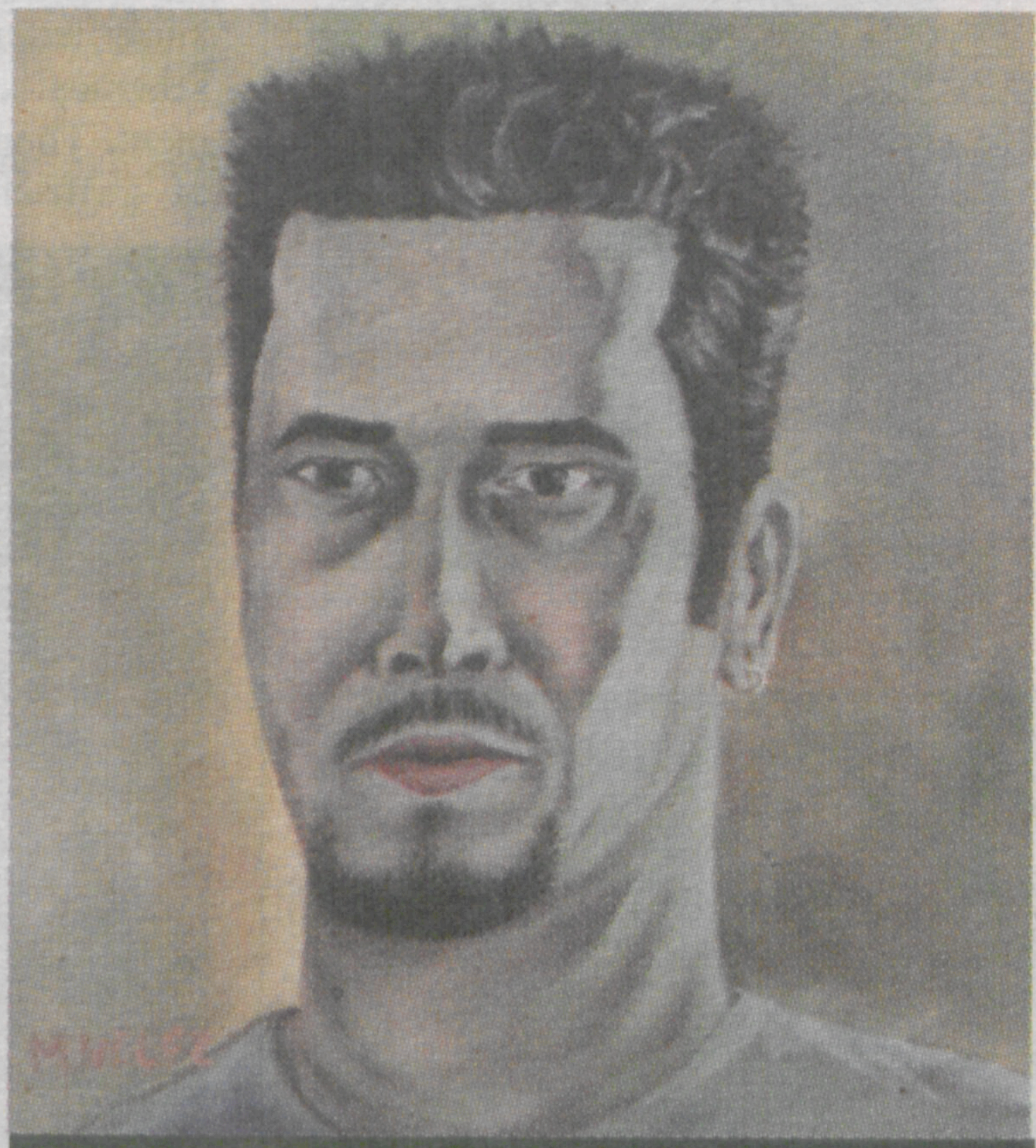

"Sounds of Laughter" 18"x 24" Oil on Canvas


"Self Portrait Faux" 16"x 20" Oil on Canvas

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Stylist Dennis O'Dell showcased in Seventeen & Elle

Ciao Bella: All about Nails, Skin, Massage & Hair

By Kristen Richards

If you're all about hot hails, healthy skin, soothing massage and pampered hair, then you're all about Ciao Bella, Olde Borough Hall Building, 2201 Market St., 2nd Floor, Camp Hill.

Owners Lori and Brian Caparella recently opened Ciao Bella as a "one-stop" spa and salon for recharging mind and body. Brian Caparella, a Nail Technician with 14 years experience and former educator for OPI Nail Products, specializes in sculpted acrylic nails, pink & white acrylics, manicures and anti-aging hand treatments and pedicures.

Lori Caparella, Esthetician and former Repechage Skin Care Educator, concentrates on customized facials, glycolic peels, acne treatments, body scrubs and body wraps and the "4-layer facia," called the best facial of the century by "Cosmopolitan UK."

Massage therapist & reiki master Stephen Turbett has 25 years experience in the optical industry. Turbett was graduated from CLN/Massage Therapy Program where he later worked as an instructor. His services center on swedish massage, myofascial release, hot stone massage, reflexology, reiki and ear candling.

International award winning hairstylist Dennis O'Dell has been showcased in Seventeen, Glamour, Elle, Top Model, and Modern Salon. He focuses on women's and men's cuts, color and highlighting.

Ciao Bella hours are Tues. 12-8, Wed. 9-4, Thurs. 12-8, Fri. 10-6 and every other Sat. 9-3. 975-CIAO (2426).

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Miss Biscuit, left, and Ciao Bella owner Brian Caparella.

Martin Velez continued

really in pieces. The fact that things in my life was dark and grey, was the reason my graffiti pieces of art were always in color. I felt as if I was on a mission; mostly a self destructive one. But I was too young to know which path in my life I was going to take.

Q: What did you find lacking in the medium of graffiti that eventually lead you to painting on canvas and exploring various art mediums and techniques?

A: Graffiti was hard to do because not only did you have to know letter design but also color schemes and character development. Then you had the pressures of girlfriends, friends, and gang influences so you had to make some people happy and add their name to the piece and so on. It was like you always had to prove yourself and I was having a tough time just trying to sort my own personal life.

The fact that I did graffiti well allowed me to feel important for the first time in my life, but it just wasn't enough for me. Fortunately, one summer my partner in crime Martin Matos, a.k.a. "Spec 5" got a job at the Guggenheim as a security guard. I would

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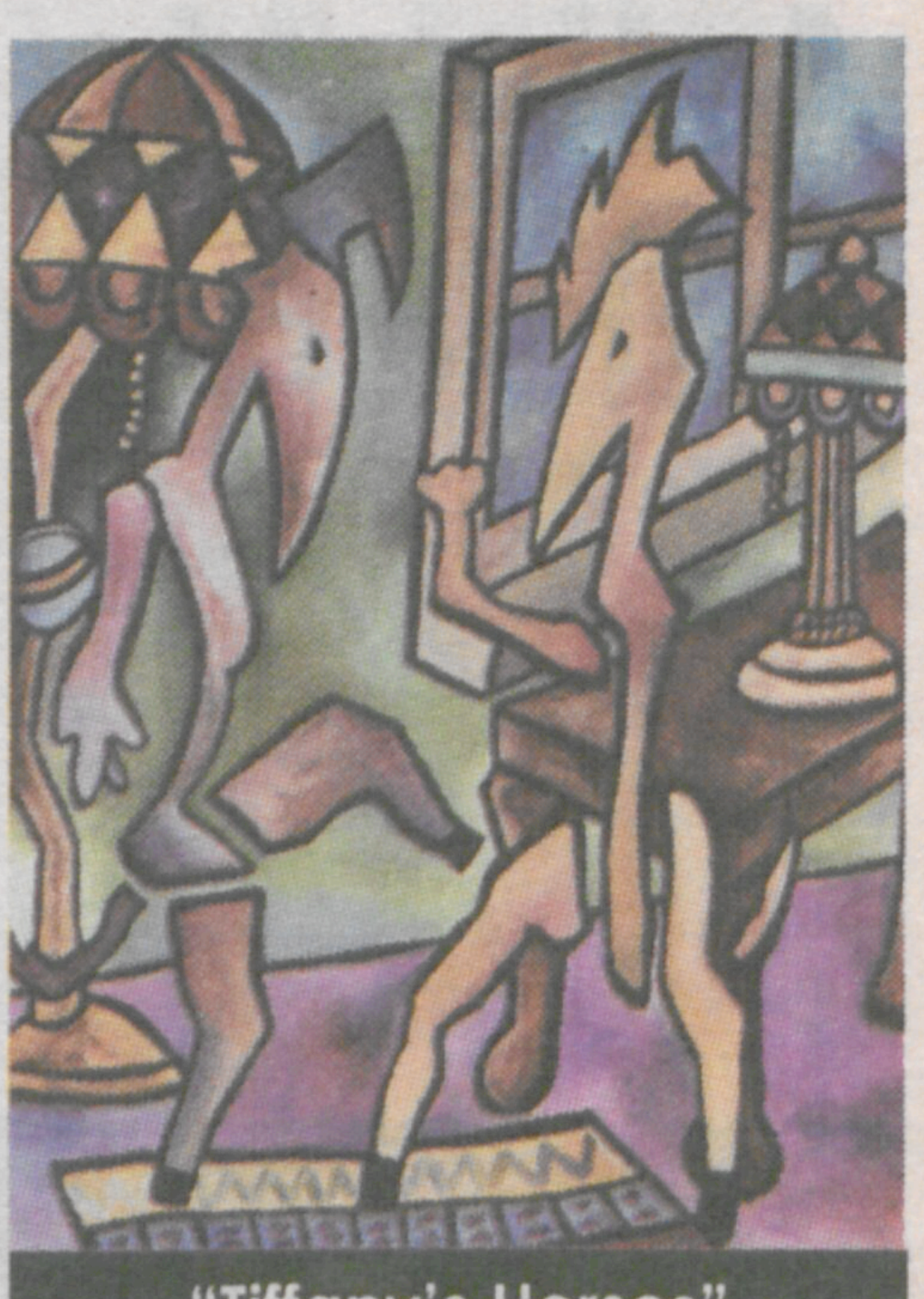
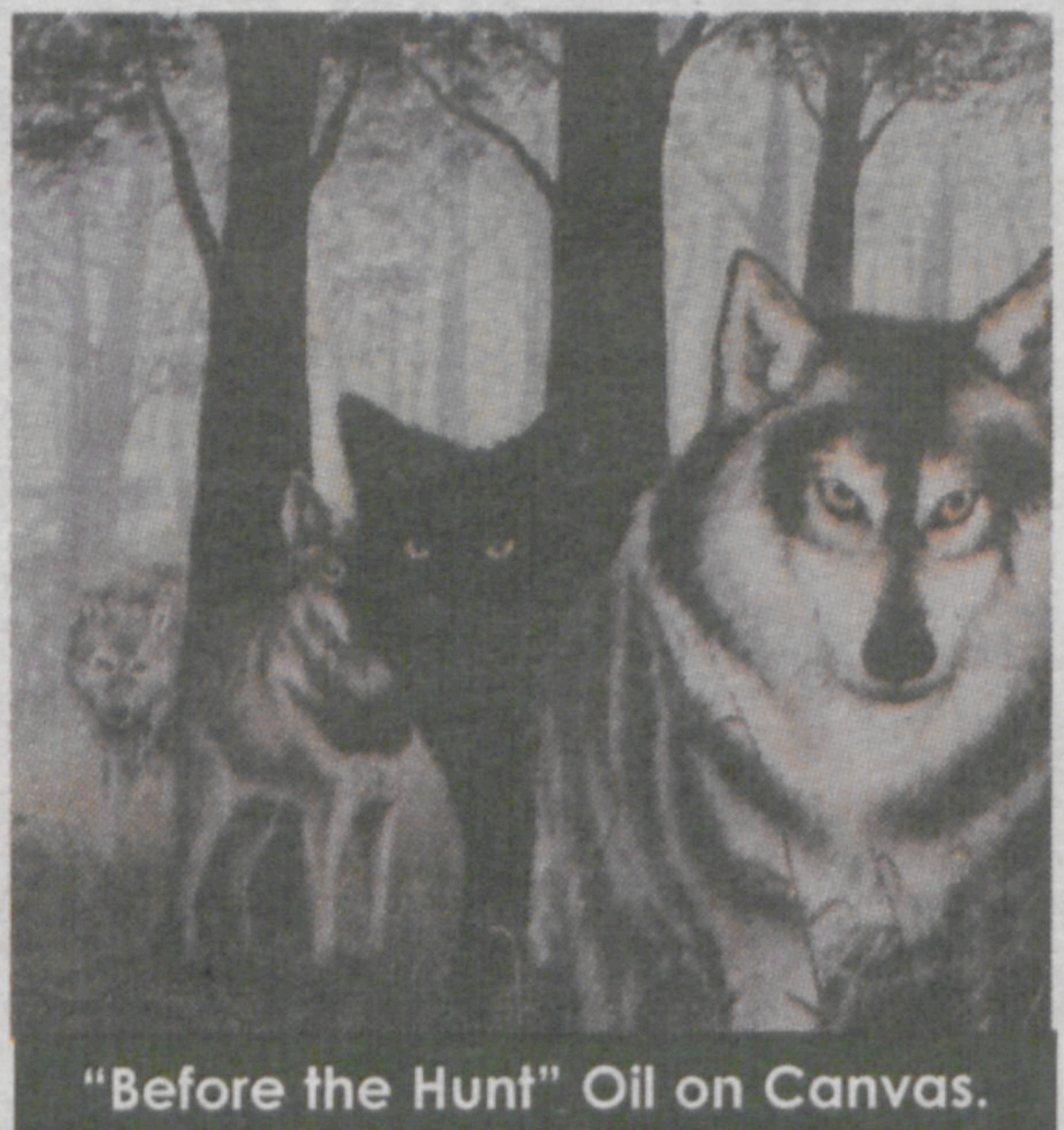
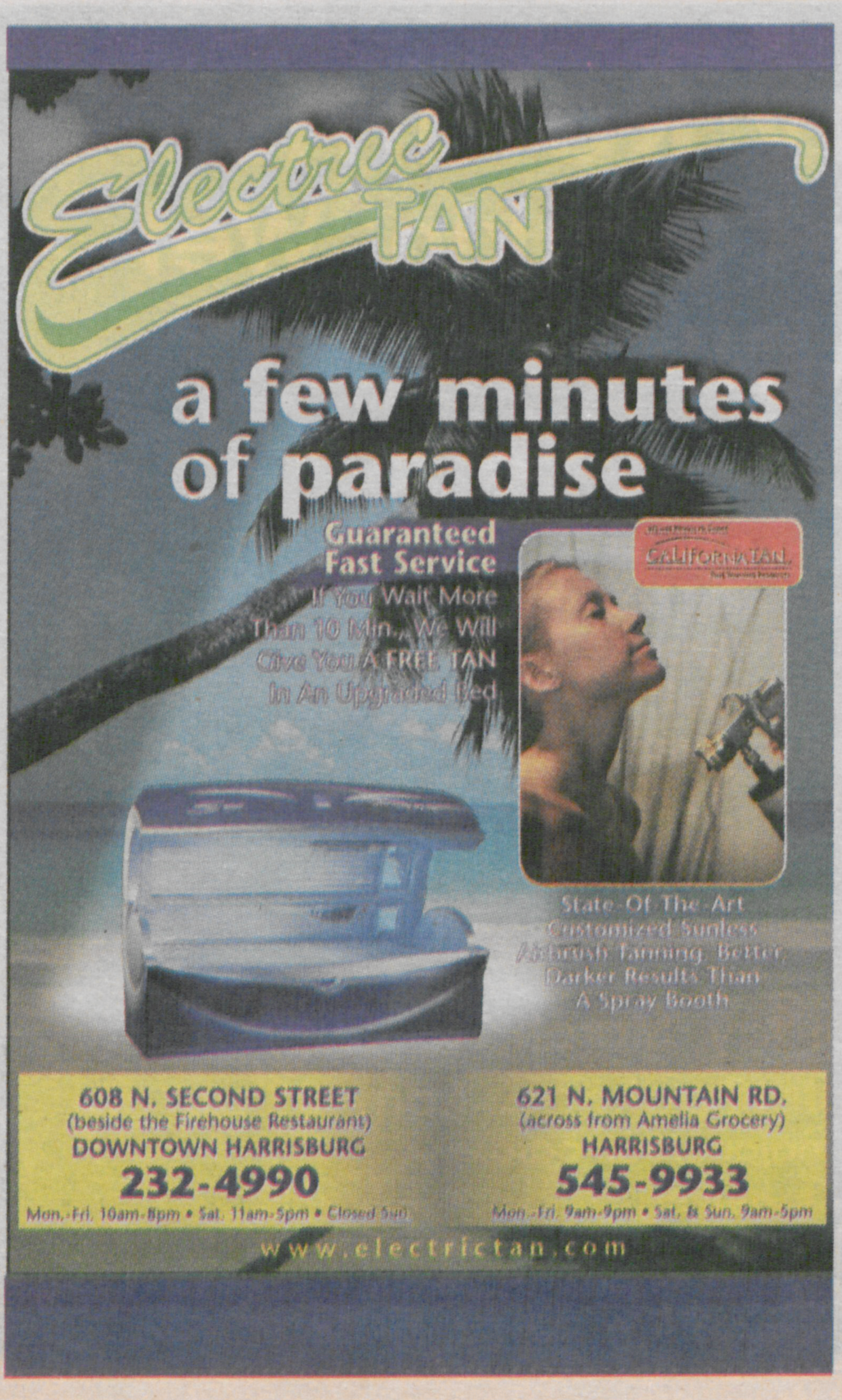


"Tiffany's Horses" 30"x 40" Oil on Canvas. Prints available.



"Before the Hunt" Oil on Canvas. Private Collection. Canvas Giclee prints available.



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Attorney Jan L. Brown: Be Proactive or Lose Rights

A volunteer on the Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg reports taking a call from a sobbing man. The caller was devastated. After his partner's stroke, his family denied him bedside access to the man he's loved and cared for all his life.

Under state and federal laws, the caller – and there are many other types of examples - has no recourse. Unless he acts proactively to assemble legal documents outlining what he and his partner want done with regard to Living Wills, Estates, and other resources.

"It happens all the time," points out Jan L. Brown, of Jan. L. Brown & Associates.

Her law group specializes in Estate Planning & Probate and Elder Law.

Brown sees many types of nontraditional couples in turmoil because laws do not recognize relationships other than between a man and a woman, and usually with a religious institution involved.

Brown, who migrated here from Washington, DC and finds central Pennsylvania attractive and affordable, says" Nontraditional couple like same-sex or nonmarried opposite-sex couples must plan. Waiting can provoke unnecessary hardships and pain."

For example, without specific and airtight language in legal documents, families who do not approve of same-sex (or untraditional) relationships can barge in, take over, and exclude a loving partner.

These examples are real. Not imagined.

Another caller to the Switchboard asked if he could do anything to help his neighbor. The neighbor was asked to leave an apartment he shared with his partner for 28 years upon the partner's overnight death from a heart attack. "Without all the documents in order prior to death and/or illness, a loving partner has no way to fight back," Brown laments. The Switchboard caller described in choking tones how he was asked not to appear at his partner's funeral services.

Another area of concern for nontraditional couples is the inheritance and estate tax.

"Both types of couples, same- and opposite-sex nontraditional couples, pay a 15 percent inheritance tax if they fail to properly assign or title assets before death," Brown notes. For example, a man may have lived with a woman to whom he isn't married for a number of years. He intends to leave her his house, a rental property, cash, a retirement plan. "The woman is in for a surprise. There's a 15 percent inheritance tax that is due. Because they are not married, they are taxed at the highest rate."

Elder Law requires experienced legal representation too. "In general, the handling of assets for the aging must be completed in a thoughtful way before a crisis arises," Brown encourages. Regardless of the type of relationship – or even a same-sex couple with again parents or family – when people we love grow old durable legal plans must be in place.

"With wills, living wills, real estate, investments, and retirement assets, anything of value, everyone must plan for the outcome they expect," Brown advises.

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Spring Concert June 10

Harrisburg Men's Chorus Concert a Success

Harrisburg Men's Chorus Winter Concert, "We Will Not Be Silent" was an evening of Handel-to-hilarity at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg. Including a tribute to Harriet Tubman in observance of Black History Month and solos, the diverse audience enjoyed a full evening.

Recently reorganized and revitalized HMC is 24 voices strong. Under the direction of David Walker, the full-house audience was treated to a program that displayed the chorus's musical versatility in songs sung and choral techniques.

The audience that night was as wonderfully diverse as the program with enthusiastic responses to the evening's entertainment.

Diversity best describes the evening's selections, ranging from the classical "Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite" from Handel's oratorio "Samson," to the raucous "Mr. Right Now."

A featured portion of the concert consisted of two selections from the "Sing For The Cure" suite; the first, "The Promise Lives On" written by Rosephanye Powell and Pamela Martin; and, "One Voice," by Pamela and Joseph M Martin, which includes the phrase "We will not be silent."

Love wove a constant thread throughout the evening, from the serious and soulful "Come to Me, O My Love" and Jaques Brel's "If We Only Have Love" to the slightly silly "Love Potion Number 9." In observance of Black History Month the chorus sang a tribute to "Harriet Tubman," composed by Walter Robinson. In addition to the choral numbers, solo selections by individual chorus members were presented.

In keeping with the season, the audience was treated to a love rendition of "The Snow Begins To Fall," as arranged for the chorus by the director followed by "The Twelve Groovy Days of Christmas," a 70s parody also arranged for HMC by chorus director Walker.

The chorus was accompanied at the piano throughout the concert by Kimm Cooper.

Laughter and applause rang

continued on page 36

Lunch Box continued

Mansion, 1829 North Front Street, in cooperation with Susquehanna Real Estate, a York based real estate development company who plans to restore the mansion for commercial use with a restaurant facility on the first floor and residential condominiums on the site. The gallery show will take place in the Tracey Mansion on Fri., March 31 and Sat. & Sun., April 1 & 2, where the lunch boxes will be for sale. Any unsold lunch boxes will be auctioned off on Sun. evening.

Friends of Midtown hopes to raise $10,000 to be divided between two fine Midtown programs: Midtown's Salvation Army Kitchen and "Loaves of Love," the Harris Street Church's food ministry for people living with HIV/AIDS.

"As a child, I can remember my mother telling me about how the Salvation Army helped us when we relocated to Harrisburg," says Councilwoman Martin-Roberts, "She was separated and moved here with six children, the holidays were approaching, and she had little money. The Salvation Army never put her through hoops or even doubted that she needed their help. I am delighted to learn that The Salvation Army, located in Midtown, will be one of the benefactors receiving dollars raised from this innovative project, '62 Artists Do Lunch.'"

Lunch boxes range from the beautiful like Carrie Wissler Thomas' "Klimptian Ladies," to whimsical "Jack Kerouac's lunchbox found in the back seat of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's car," by Mimi Shapiro, to the truly monumental like graphic designer Lorna Carlson's "Lunch Lady Bravura," a four foot high piece that enters the realm of sculpture.

According to Mayor Reed, "Harrisburg residents should recognize many of the artists participating. A large number of them contributed their talents and creativity to the Whitaker Center's very successful Cow Parade, and while many of the artists are regional favorites like Earl Blust and Pat Koscienski, the recent HGTV star Robert Stadnycki is also included. Former Susquehanna University art instructor Florence Putterman, who is represented in collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, has also contributed a lunch box."

Dave Robertson adds, "Friends of Midtown is particularly proud to be working with a very diverse group of artists representing various ages, races,

continued on page 28

Local expert

New Advice Column by "Dear Dot"

"Dear Dot" premieres this issue and is written by Dorothy E. Everhart, a Dillsburg licensed social worker, life coach and training consultant.

Dot grew up in York and returned to this area several years ago, while working for the University of Pittsburgh's Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, located in Mechanicsburg. Dot worked as an independent trainer for PCWT before joining the staff in 2002.

Dot received her Master of Social Work degree from Temple University, a Master of Divinity Degree from Boston University School of Theology, and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion from Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA. In 1998, she "retired" after working for 20 years in public social services for the Tioga County Human Services Agency in Wellsboro, PA. She's been an adjunct college instructor in Sociology at the North Campus of the Pennsylvania College of Technology. Dot was active in the Wellsboro community with the National Organization for Women, the Tioga AIDS Resource & Support Alliance, and the Wellsboro Town Band, playing flute and piccolo.

Living near Dillsburg with her life partner, Kay, and "Lizzie," their Shih Tzu, Dot is active with the Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley, a welcoming, liberal congregation in Boiling Springs. Fly fishing on the Yellow Breeches, tying flies, nature photography, cooking, discovering new restaurants and planting flowers and trees fill Dot's "spare" time.

Those with life questions, seeking advice from an experienced social worker and life coach may reach Dot via email at doteverhart@yahoo.com. Those submitting questions should be reminded that this free service is a for educational or leisure reading and should not substitute for clinical counseling when a face-to-face, ongoing therapeutic relationship is advised.

Dear Dot Advice

Dear Dot:

I've been dating a woman for about six weeks. We've been to dinner, movies, on long walks.

But whatever we do, she involves alcohol - a drink before or after. I'm not much of a drinker.

I like her and don't want to mess things up. What can I do?

Signed: Dating Dilemma

***

Dear Dating Dilemma:

Congratulations for being halfway there! You have told yourself the truth - there's an issue needing discussion. Telling her is the other half of the journey. We hedge what we say and do when we fear that we might be rejected. Others get to know us, then - not as we really are - but as we think they want us to be. If you don't want alcohol to be a part of every date, say so. If you continue the impression that alcohol on every date is OK with you, you will "mess things up" later when you feel you must tell her.

Dating helps us to get to know someone well enough to be able to decide whether we want to spend the rest of our lives with him/her. We sometimes make this important decision on inaccurate information. Some partners successfully project false images until after the honeymoon. Then, they feel it's safe to burp out loud, leave dirty clothes on the floor, disclose a mountain of credit card debt - or share any number of things that are true about themselves, but might have been "deal breakers." Then, the honeymoon really IS over. We need to find a time during dating to share the important facts and feelings of our true selves.

Mark Twain said, "Never tell the truth to people who are not worthy of it." If you see this person as "worthy" of this truth about your values, tell her. If not, move on and find someone you deem worthy of hearing the truth of your life - share it and you will live happily ever after. Well, there's no guarantee of "ever after," but you will be happier than living in the tension of an untold truth. You can do it! Thanks for asking!

Dot

Martin Velez continued

go down to see him and we would look at the amazing artwork. That's where I began to explore the world of art and I found myself intrigued with the impressionistic style of painting. From there I started attending other galleries mostly in Manhattan, and found myself swaying away from graffiti. Although graffiti was very well respected in the streets, deep inside I felt that I wanted to be respected on a higher level. I got a lot of slack from my pears however, as I would try to attempt to paint other subject matters instead of graffiti. I found the techniques of painting with a brush very difficult so I became discouraged with my results. I like to think I was yearning for another passion, perhaps something normal in my life. The more I attended the galleries the more my passion and respect for the arts grew. Eventually I realized that if I wanted more than the streets, I would have to get out of the streets. So I did.

Martin can be reached at majesticblends.com or P.O. Box 108, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; 717-766-9879.

Lunch Box continued

lifestyles, and including people with disabilities. To see such a display of unity and creativity — supporting the Salvation Army's and Harris St. Church's two excellent meals outreach programs in Midtown — is a truly wonderful thing."

Friends of Midtown has received $500 in funding from the Harrisburg City Council through Councilwoman Gloria Martin-Roberts to purchase the blank lunchboxes for the "Do

continued on page 29

"62 Area Artists Do Lunch" with their specially-painted "lunch box" art on display at Harrisburg's Tracey Mansion, on Front Street, March 31, April 1 & 2. Event proceeds benefit Midtown Harrisburg's Salvation Army Kitchen and Harris St. Church's "Loaves of Love" food program benefiting HIV/AIDS patients and others in need. View lunch boxes at www..friendsofmidtown.org.

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Harrisburg Choral Society's Second Concert of the Season

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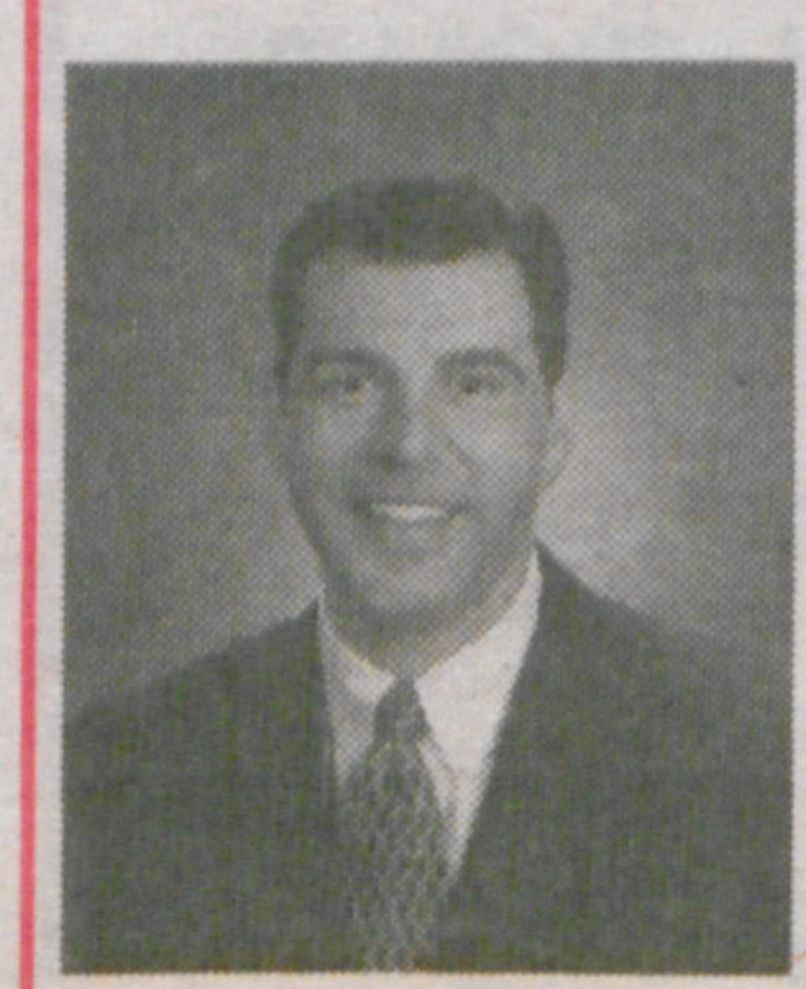

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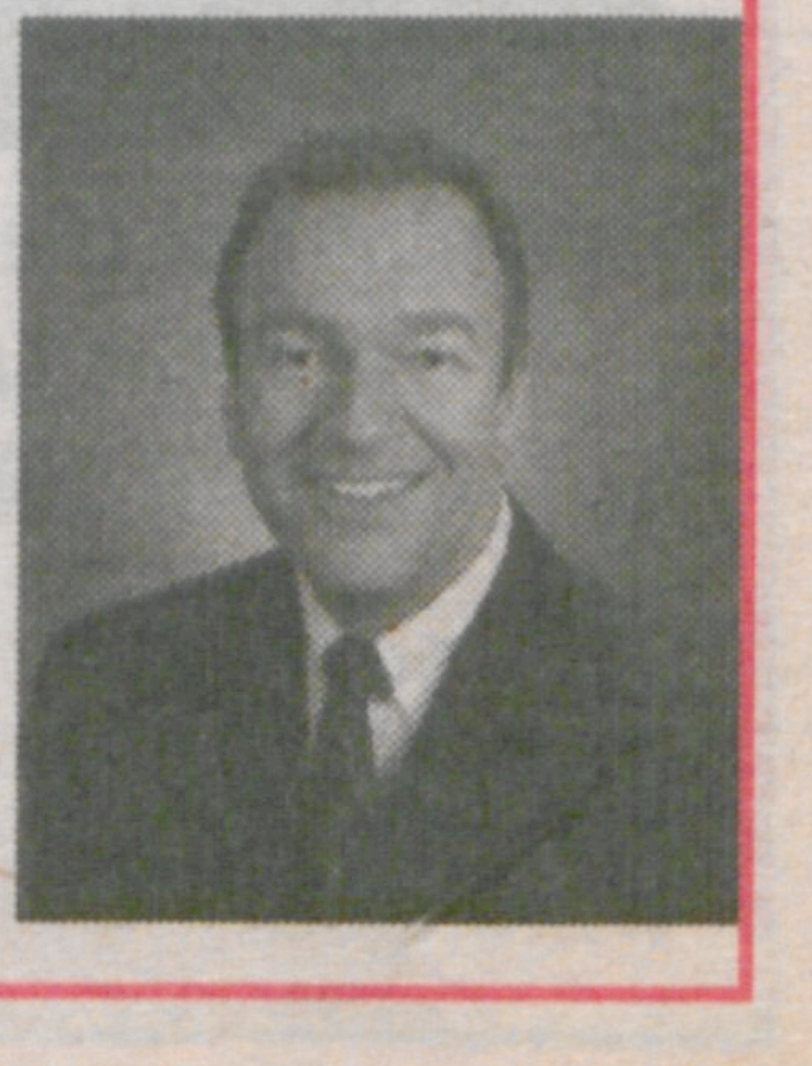
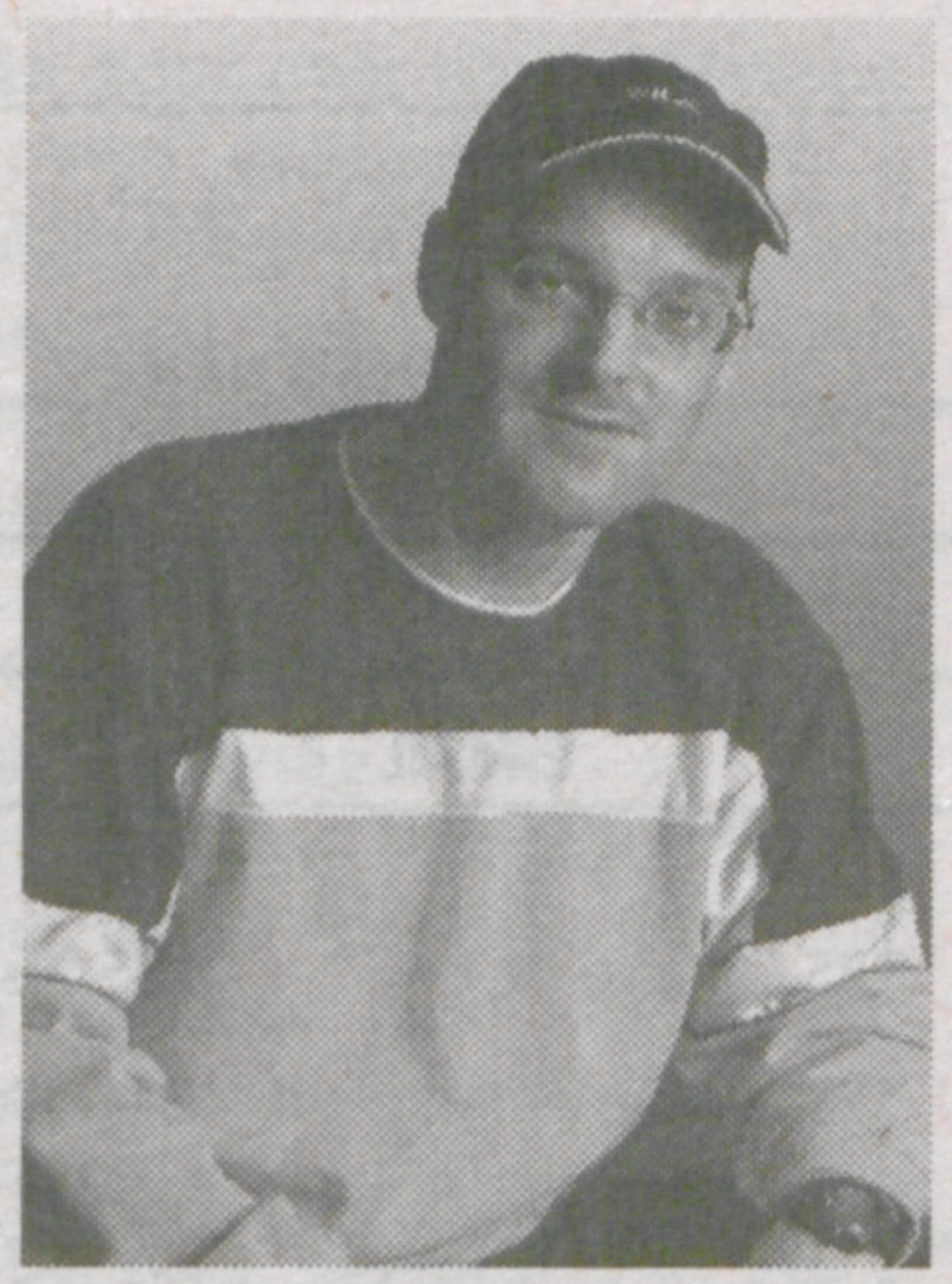


Music Review

DJ Barry's Dance Music Review



Welcome to my world of music. In this issue I have a few hot club hits and R&B songs to tell you about, also a new sound in the music world.

Hot new hits playing at a club near you...

By now most of you probably have heard the hit song "Check On It" from Beyonce. For a twist, check out the club remix from Junior Vasquez. "Check on it" has an irresistible hook and blends Beyonce's powerful vocals perfectly. This is a hit on my list. Natasha Bedingfield has a new single and club hit called "Unwritten".

This time she uses the remix talents of Johnny Vicious. Vicious delivers a spacey drum intro that eventually breaks into a pounding, dramatic, and progressive song. You would probably not even know that it was the song "Unwritten", until you heard the vocals of Natasha. Kaci Brown, a newcomer to the club music scene, has a stomping song out called "unbelievable". Kaci has a great vocal range and can really belt out some lyrics. "Unbelievable" is a good upbeat house song with a catchy hook.

From radio to the club...

Rhianna, the 18 year old from Barbados, has a second hit on her hands, called "If It's Lovin That You Want". This song rolls along with a catchy reggae beat and melody. The Pussycat Dolls are back with the hit called "Stickwitu". Who said you couldn't throw an album together over night and have another hit? The "Dolls" have done it with their lush vocals on a down tempo harmonizing song.

The new sound in town...

Every so often a new sound comes along that changes the music scene. Sometimes the new sound evolves from an old style of music. The new sound is called "Reggaeton", with a Jamaican reggae sound with Latin influence. This new sound opens a door in the music world, Bringing a new category of music, to be filled by new upcoming artists. The sound has exploded in big cities and is trickling into our area. All of the trendy clubs catering to a more youthful crowd are jumping on it. While a little can be good thing, too much can alienate the fans of other types of dance music. Do you really want to hear the same thing in every club that you walk into? There is a much needed change for dance music but this not it. It took awile for rap music to grow on this DJ, "Raggaeton" may take awhile also. In my opinion, you either like it or you hate it.

Stay tuned for another explosion of music information in the next issue of Alternative Central.

HBG Fabulous continued

cal realities of anti-gay laws with the realities of economic development?

We won't enter into a post-gay period until America's glbt community enjoys total and equal rights, and we're not there yet. Our community will enjoy many highs as well as upsets as we continue our ongoing struggle for equality, Kompes says. He does believe our economic viability as a community is going to have a positive impact on our fight for equality.

Living in a capitalist democracy, many of our advances are directly related to our glbt economic power and spending, now estimated at over $600 billion annually, Kompes says. Gay spending makes our community more visible. As our buying power becomes recognized, we'll continue to see advances politically, Kompes forcasts.

As Kompes talks to readers and reporters a wonderful concept repeatedly emerges: That the glbt community is basically like every other community. People are just people with the same hopes, dreams, desires, and needs. It's this realization, in the end, that creates a foundation for equality, Kompes concludes.

HBG Symphony continued

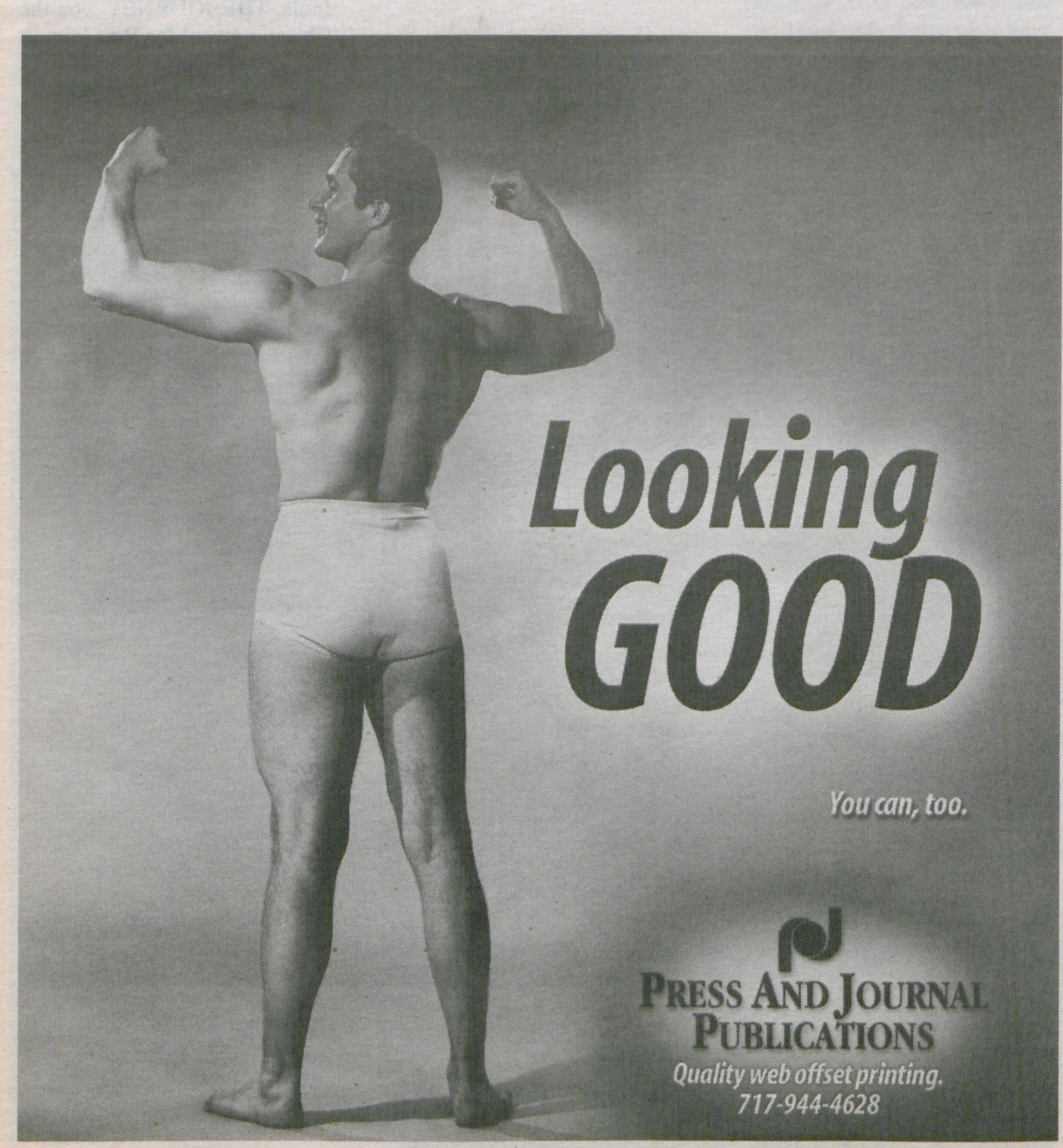
on Saturday, March 18, in the State Library lobby. The reception starts at 6:00 pm. The auction is scheduled at 6:45 pm.

Mr. Bull will be on hand for the reception and the public is cordially invited. Proceeds from the auction benefit HSO. The painting is generously donated by Mr. Bull and his local gallery representative, Kathie's Christmas and Collectibles, Camp Hill. For more information, visit the artist's website at BullArt.com or Kathie's Christmas and Collectibles at KathiesChristmas.com.

Kathie's Christmas and Collectibles will host a meet-and-greet reception with the artist from 6 to 8 pm on Friday, March 17 at their store and gallery. Mr. Bull will be present to sign other artwork and put the finishing touches on the painting to be auctioned the following evening. Kathie's Christmas and Collectibles is located at 3309 Hartzdale Drive in Camp Hill.

Lunch Box continued

Lunch" project. "Love for our fellow-man is a condition which must exist for a community to prosper and maintain a quality of life. My hat is off to Friends of Midtown for "loving thy neighbor."



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Lesbian DVDs Hit the Market

Two new lesbian DVDs hit the market for 2006.

The short film collection THE ULTIMATE LESBIAN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL includes 10 amazing new shorts by, for, and about lesbians. Release date is January 31.

Then, Ligy Pullappally's moving romantic drama THE JOURNEY, about the forbidden love between two young Indian women, releases February 14.

The shorts collection gathers the best lesbian shorts from the film festival circuit this past year and puts them all on one disc, including hilarious comedies, beautiful romances, and gripping dramas.

The DVD showcases a number of up-and-coming talents, including Chris J. Russo (A WOMAN REPORTED), Roberta Marie Munroe (DANI AND ALICE), Silas Howard (FROZEN SMILE) and Abigail Severance (SAINT HENRY) and features such stars as Guin Turner, Moira Kelly, and Kip Pardue.

Filmed in the Kerala region of India, THE JOURNEY won the Chicago Award for Best Film at the 40th Chicago International Film Festival for its touching portrayal of two young Indian women who grow up together and fall in love, defying family and society. Director Ligy Pullappally based the film on the true events of two young lesbians in India who fled their university after being threatened with expulsion after rumors of their relationship surfaced.

the journey
show me

Lesbian Notions continued

While I'll continue to relate to Moira/Max the butch dyke, if and when she transitions to he, there will finally be a healthy transperson on TV that FTMs can relate to.

Libby Post is the founding chair of the Empire State Pride Agenda and a political commentator on public radio, on the Web, and in print media. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com.

Lancaster Native

Alternative Central Talks to Junior Vasquez

Junior Vasquez
By Winnie McCroy

Since the 80s, infamous DJ Junior Vasquez has kept legions of club kids dancing until way after the sun comes up with his pounding house beats and stellar skills on the turntables. This Lancaster, PA born entertainer's work has taken him from clubs in New York to Tokyo, mixing beats for divas from Madonna to Cher. He battled crystal meth addiction and returned his focus to his music, the thing that had him hooked from the beginning. Now his indie record label Centaur Music is back on top after a three years break with the release of Party Groove: White Party 7. The launch drew a huge crowd to Virgin Records Union Square, where Vasquez posed for photos and signed autographs. Central Alternative caught up with this hometown hero on the eve of his launch of his playlists on XM Satellite Radio to see how his music has touched the world.

CA: You hail from Lancaster, PA, but moved to New York City when you were young. Tell us a little about life in Lancaster, and what happened when you moved to the city.

Vasquez: Lancaster was my hometown, 37 years ago. I went to high school at Lancaster Catholic High, graduated in 68. Back then the only scene there was. Wow, I went to dances, but there was nothing else. I ran away to New York when I was 16, but I came back. I was at Franklin & Marshall College and met a lot of older guys who lived in the city. I wanted to be a fashion designer, and I wanted to get out of Lancaster, to meet models and design clothes. When I got here, I went to FIT [Fashion Institute of Technology]. It wasn't working. Out of desperation, I started buying records and DJing.

CA: What advice would you give a young, aspiring DJ?

Vasquez: I'd probably tell them to do it for the love of music, and obviously not for the paycheck, because that doesn't come for a while. You've got to make your own niche, because it's very competitive now. I think the days of the DJ gods are gone, and you have to prove yourself producing, not spinning records.

CA: Tell us a little about your start, spinning at the Bassline, then moving on to the SoundFactory and the Tunnel, going on to the Palladium and Twilo. How has the scene changed in the past 20 years?

Vasquez: I think club laws are harder now, because you can't be open past certain hours, and obviously drugs have been a bad influence on the situation. The music will change anyway, but the clubs today are coming and going nothing is sticking anymore. [With crystal meth] it's a different scene; people are really more fucked up now it's craziness. I had my own problem with it, it's really changed due to that, but it is what it is. In the in 80s people were taking acid. Also, there are a lot of after-hours clubs in New York now, but I'm not really part of that anymore.

CA: What's the best club to spin in NYC? What about the rest of the U.S.? What is the best place to spin internationally?

Vasquez: In New York City, I don't think there is any best club. Crobar is good. Personally I'm at the Roxy now, but I think since Exit closed, there has been nothing like it. Nationally, Seattle is great. I spin once a month there, and it is about the music, not about the scene. Internationally, Tokyo is the best the clubs Agaya and Yellow. You just feel like a celebrity when you're there. They really roll out the red carpet. I've been there about seven times, and they really cater to big DJs. The clubs are unbelievable.

CA: You've worked with Madonna, Whitney, Cher, Cyndi Lauper, Prince What's your best diva story?

Vasquez: Going to L.A. to work for Cher, and thinking when she came to the studio she would be really tall, but she's not. I thought she would be towering over me, but she was tiny. And maybe when I worked with Whitney Houston in New Jersey. We were supposed to have several sessions, but she just wouldn't make it to the studio. I had to drive out and drive back again and again.

JVM AND CENTAUR PRESENT
WHITE PARTY 7
JUNIOR VASQUEZ

CA: Your label, Junior Vasquez Music, was founded in 2000, and you have insisted on keeping it real by releasing artists only on 12-inch vinyl. Is

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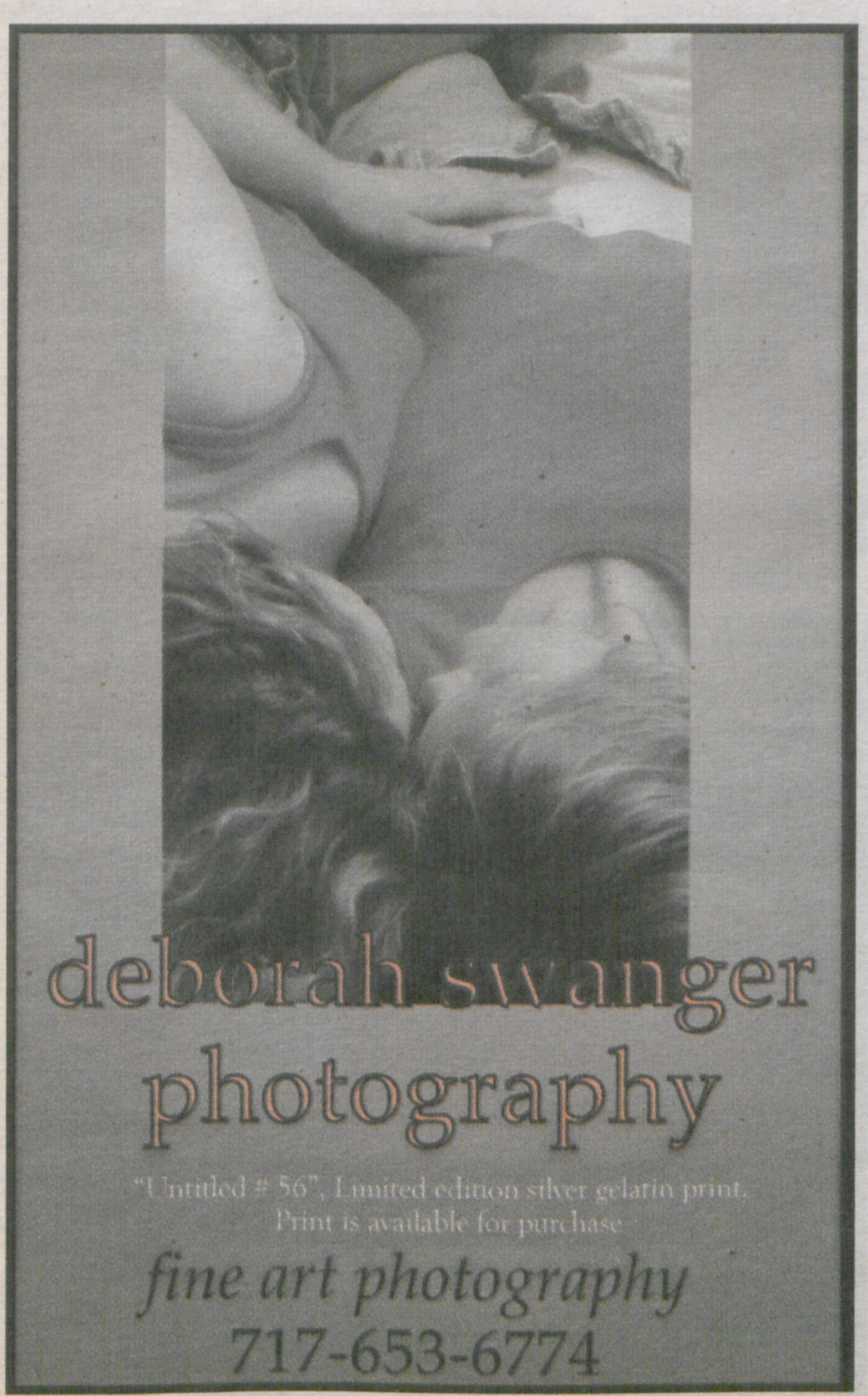
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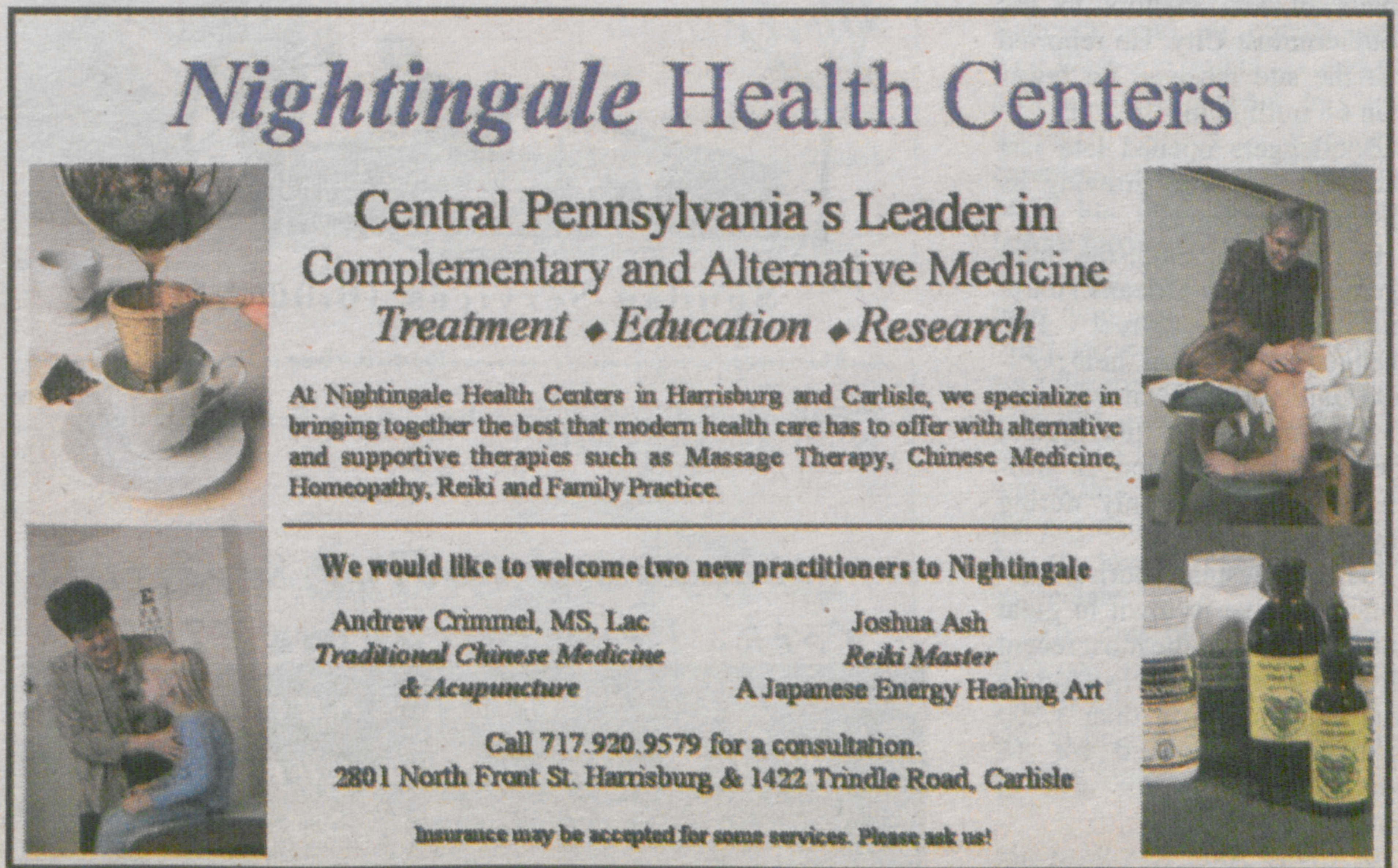
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MTV's "The Real World: Key West"

Is Key West Going Straight?

By Christopher Tittel
Key West Correspondent

"I wish I knew how to quit you."

Ron Babcock leaned back in the saddle mounted on the barstool and took a long draw on a glass of chilled chardonnay, as friends around him laughed, raised their glasses and repeated after Babcock the now-famous line from "Brokeback Mountain."

The line just so happens to reflect a sentiment that Babcock shares with other die-hard Key Westers who circle around the watering hole nightly at Bootleggers, the gay country-western bar within roping distance of the drag queens strutting around the 801 Club on world-famous Duval Street.

In November 2005, The New York Times posed the question: "Is Key West Going Straight?"

With several "queers-only" resorts in the Southernmost City going "all-inclusive" in recent months (all inclusive means straights and gays are welcome) and more mainstream cruise ship passengers daily swarming Mallory Square and Duval Street, it's no wonder the Times and others are wondering about the future of the gay and lesbian community on an island that prides itself on its "one human family" philosophy.

Ask Ron Babcock and he'll tell you that gays and lesbians are, in fact, finding it hard to quit Key West.

"It's not going straight," he said with a grin. "It's just less floozy."

Case in point: Babcock is the founder of Pistol & Enema (pistolandenema.com), an online resource for gay and lesbian residents of and visitors to the Southernmost City. He reported that the site received no fewer than 68 million hits in 2005.

Bootleggers opened late last year and has been growing its clientele ever since.

In December 2005, the management of New Orleans House and Bourbon Street Pub changed the rules on their poolside Garden Bar. What was once a clothing-optional playground for men and women is now reserved for men only during daylight hours.

Gay and lesbian tourists continue to arrive in town in great numbers: One of the most recent arrivals was an Olivia Cruises ship carrying more than 1,700 lesbians that docked for 14 hours of fun in the sun in January.

In August 2005, Key West and Monroe County opened their doors to gays and lesbians from Tampa, St. Petersburg and other Hillsborough County communities. In a show of solidarity against a Hillsborough County Commission resolution denying any support for or recognition of Pride events throughout the county, the Key West and Monroe County governments promptly adopted official proclamations declaring the second weekend of the month "Pride in Exile" and treated out-of-town visitors to special celebrations that culminated in a march up Duval Street with a 100-foot long Pride flag.

Hurricane Wilma washed over much of Key West in October 2005, with some businesses closing their doors permanently due to overwhelming damage and the high cost of repairs. Even so, the storm failed to dampen the spirits of the owners of world-renowned Island House. Despite fast-moving water rising several inches into rooms on the first floor and filling the outdoor pool to overflowing and high winds tearing at awnings and battering palm trees and landscape greenery, the gay guesthouse was practically good as new and back in business within only a few of weeks.

Island House offers world class settings for men of taste.

Jon Allen, co-owner of Island House, also made his interest in maintaining Key West as a premiere destination for gay and lesbian tourists clear in an interview with Celebrate! (celebratekeywest.com) last year.

Allen told the gay and lesbian newspaper that one of the reasons he has not chosen to go the route of so many other lodging establishments on the island and convert Island House into condominiums is that potential buyers might change the very special nature of the resort that so many gay men around the globe have come to appreciate.

Island House, Key West, 1129 Fleming Street, Key West, Florida 33040, 305 294 6284; Toll free 800 890 6284; Fax 305 292 0051; www.islandhousekeywest.com; email. IHKeyWest@aol.com

The Key West Business Guild, which promotes gay tourism and local businesses, recently renewed the lease that co-locates it with the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Key West for another three years.

"There's a natural synergy between the two organizations being located in the same building," KWBG President Kent Henry said.

The world spotlight continues to shine on Key West's gay and lesbian community every New Year's Eve, with CNN's live coverage of Sushi the drag queen cradled in a giant read shoe as it's lowered from the balcony at New Orleans House to the sidewalk below at the stroke

continued on page 33

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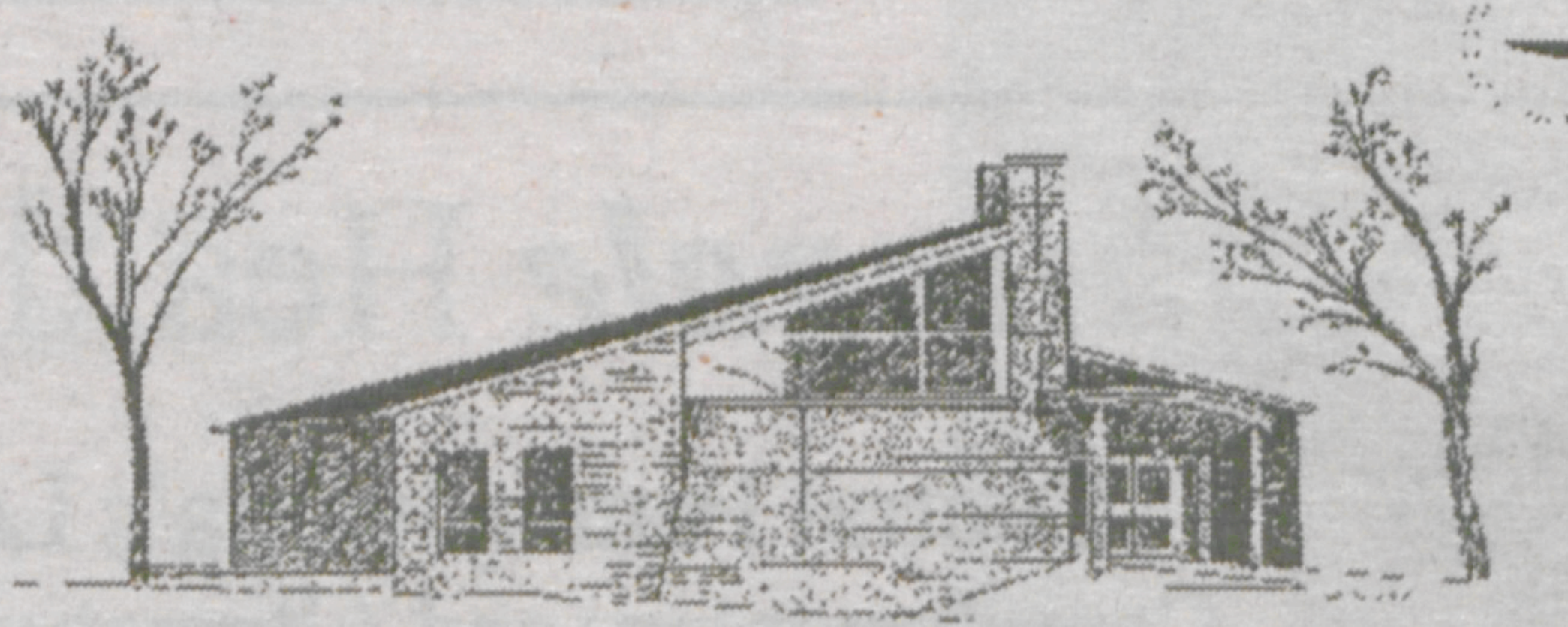

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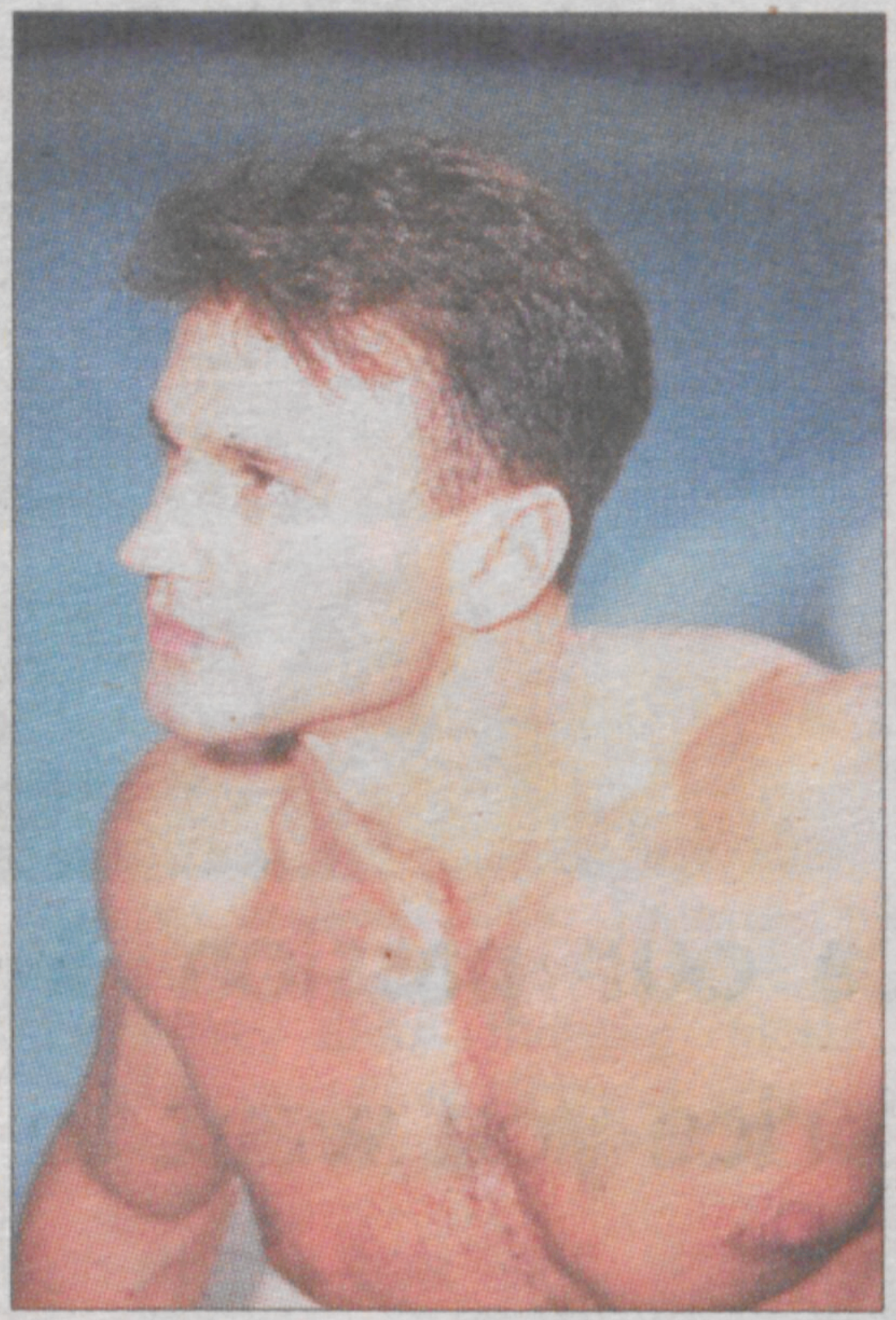

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Vasquez continued

that an homage to old school, or is spinning vinyl just better?

Vasquez: Spinning vinyl is way better; CDs are very frustrating. It's just not the same feeling. I don't like it but I have no choice. I'm getting used to CDs.

CA: Your new CD Party Groove: White Party 7 is out. What are some of your favorite mixes on that album?

Vasquez: Beyoncé, and Vernessa Mitchell, and Jason Walker. Veronica's on there too [in the Tim Rex Experiment track Relentless (Just a Game); I

continued on page 35

Key West continued

of midnight.

And gays and lesbians continue to make their presence known in city and county government and the local business and law enforcement communities, as well as on the local entertainment scene.

Often referred to as New Orleans' sister city, Key West last month hosted a five-day Mardi Gras celebration. In addition to the Queen of Bourbon Pageant, the Bayou BBQ and Pig Roast and the King of Bourbon Contest, the city also hosted 2,000 gay cruise ship passengers when an RSVP cruise dropped anchor at Mallory Square.

Last month MTV began airing "The Real World: Key West.". The show, which will (of course) feature at least one gay cast member, will include stops at Island House and other gay hot spots around town.

Babcock told the story of recently having trouble starting his car. He phoned a friend, who advised Babcock to jump on the front and back bumpers of the car in order to work out any clogs or kinks in the driving system. As he was hopping up and down on his rear bumper, Babcock said an openly gay Key West cop pulled up next to him and asked what he was doing. When Babcock explained, the cop was quick to offer his own bit of advice before moving along.

"Honey, I'm a bigger queen than you are," the cop said. "Just get in, turn the key and start the truck."

It was a moment that only those who know the warmth in which this island has embraced the gay and lesbian community for so many years can truly appreciate.

"The time of labels is over," Babcock said. "Anything this side of Eden, nobody cares. It's OK to be gay here. We're here to have fun."

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Vasquez continued

like that one.

CA: Is this a release under your parent label, Centaur Music?

Vasquez: It's really a release on my own label, Junior Vasquez Music. We A&R'ed it and promoted it ourselves, and Centaur is distributing it. The staff at Centaur has worked very hard on the retail program, and it's exciting.

CA: Your Jr.'s World playlists are now on XM Satellite, where anyone can access them. Do you think satellite radio will change the way the world gets music?

Vasquez: Oh yeah. It can be (pauses) I myself have to be prepared for the dangers of it. But I think the good will outweigh the bad. You'll be able to download anything. Creatively, it's great but you can get anything I do online two days after I do it, so I might as well just give it to them.

CA: Everyone knows anout your falling out with Madonna over the mix you did of her answering machine message in 1996. She vowed to never work with you again because of that song. Could she use a sense of humor?

Vasquez: I'm always trying to do something with her but I don't care [about her sense of humor].

CA: Do you think you'll ever work with her again?

Vasquez: Probably not, but you never know. It's not my choice; I would love to work with her again.

CA: As for your old digs in PA, do you have any plans to return and spin for your old hometown crew?

Vasquez: I don't have any upcoming gigs in Pennsylvania this year, but I will probably be in Philadelphia for the Blue Ball next January.

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Men's Chorus continued

through the auditorium all evening, climaxing with the audience on its feet cheering the chorus and the quality of their concert. It was a rewarding, and yes, a thrilling evening "all the way 'round."Next concert is June 10, the Harrisburg Men's Chorus Spring Concert. This concert will be presented in Theatre Harrisburg's Jay and Nancy Krevsky Production Center at 6th and Hurlock Streets.

HMC extends an invitation for singers to join. For information, call David at 233-4353 or Tim at 433-0184. Rehearsals are Sunday evenings, 7 pm.

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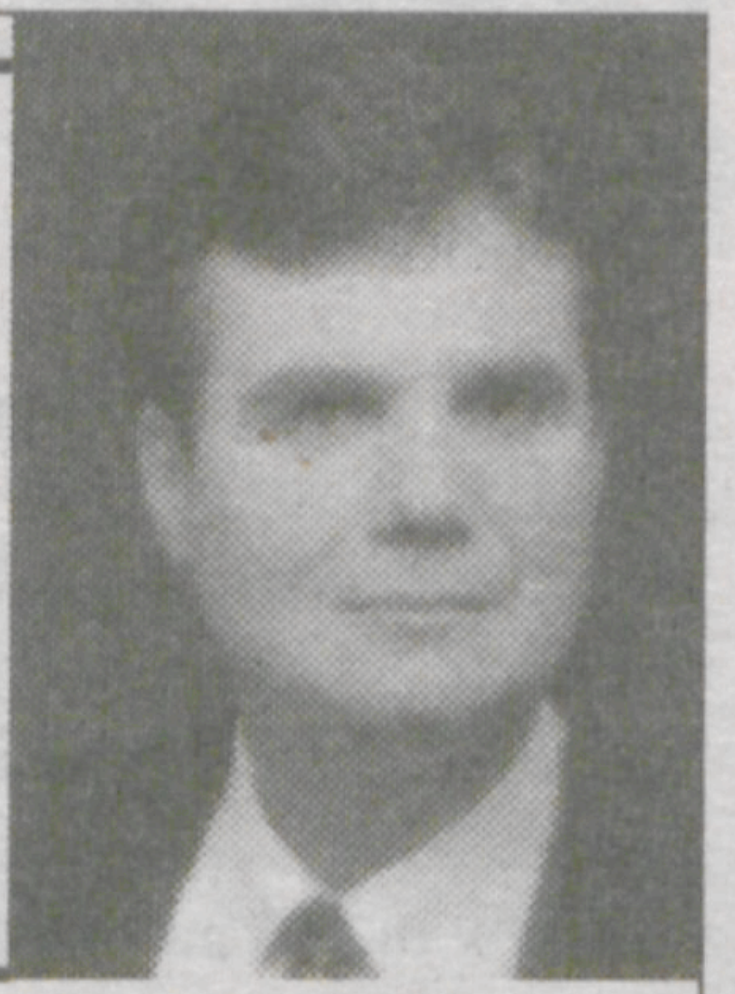

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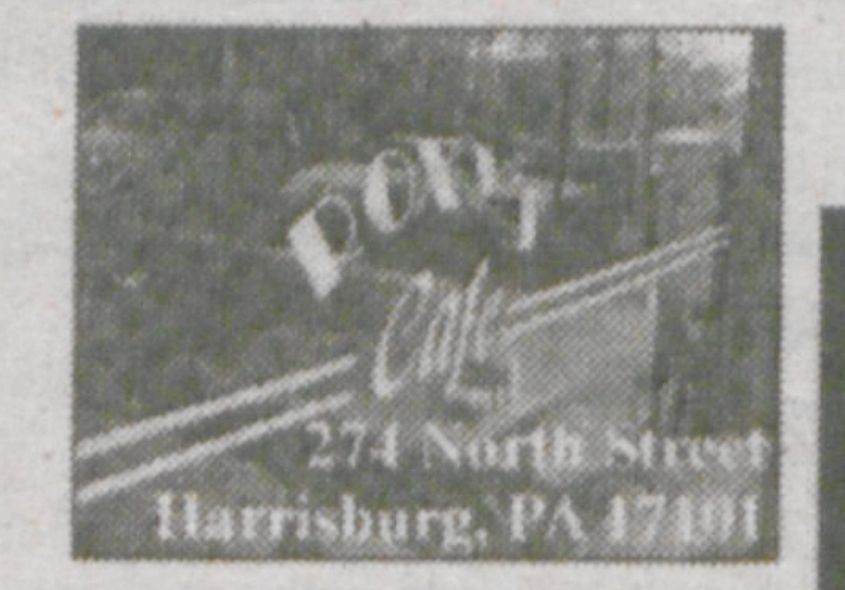

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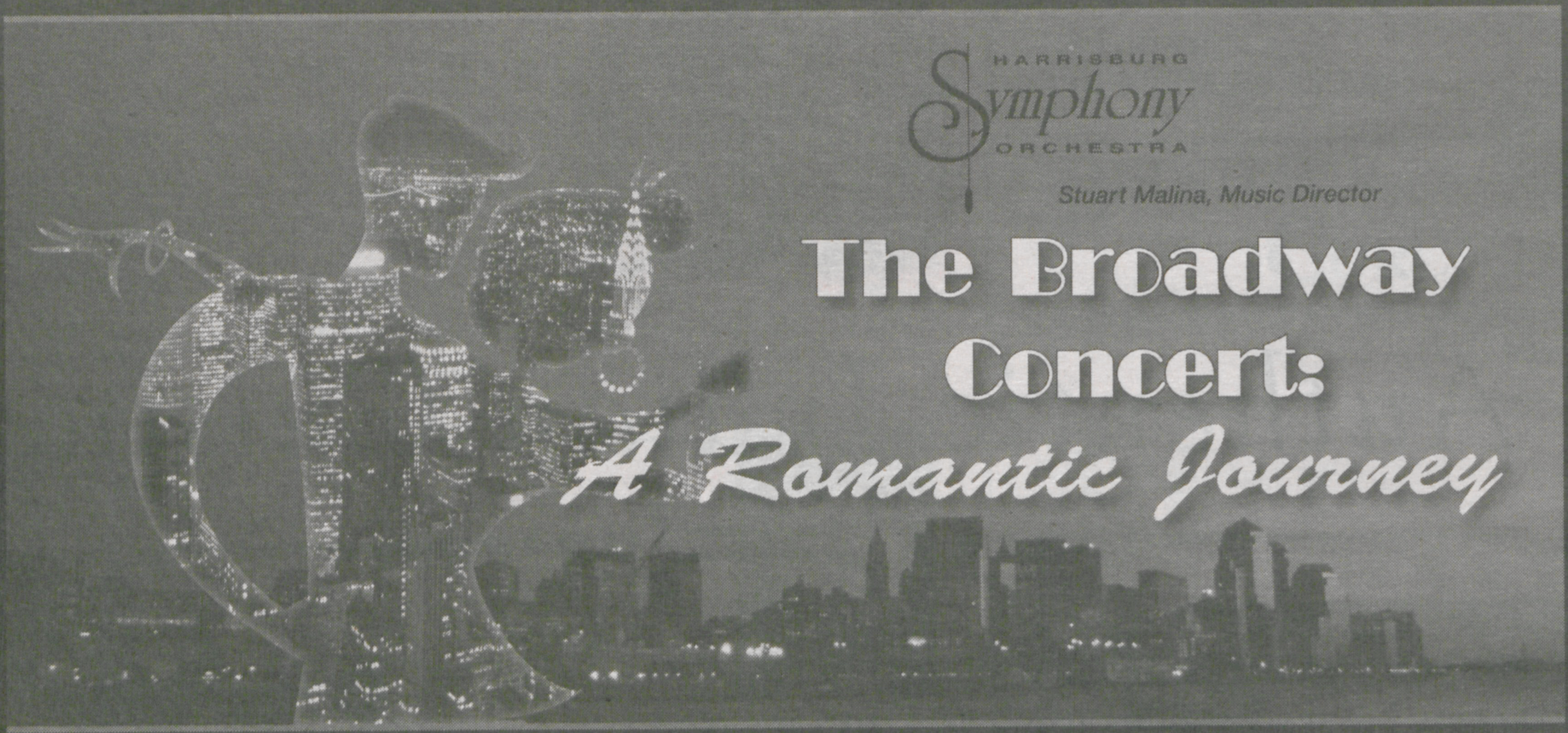
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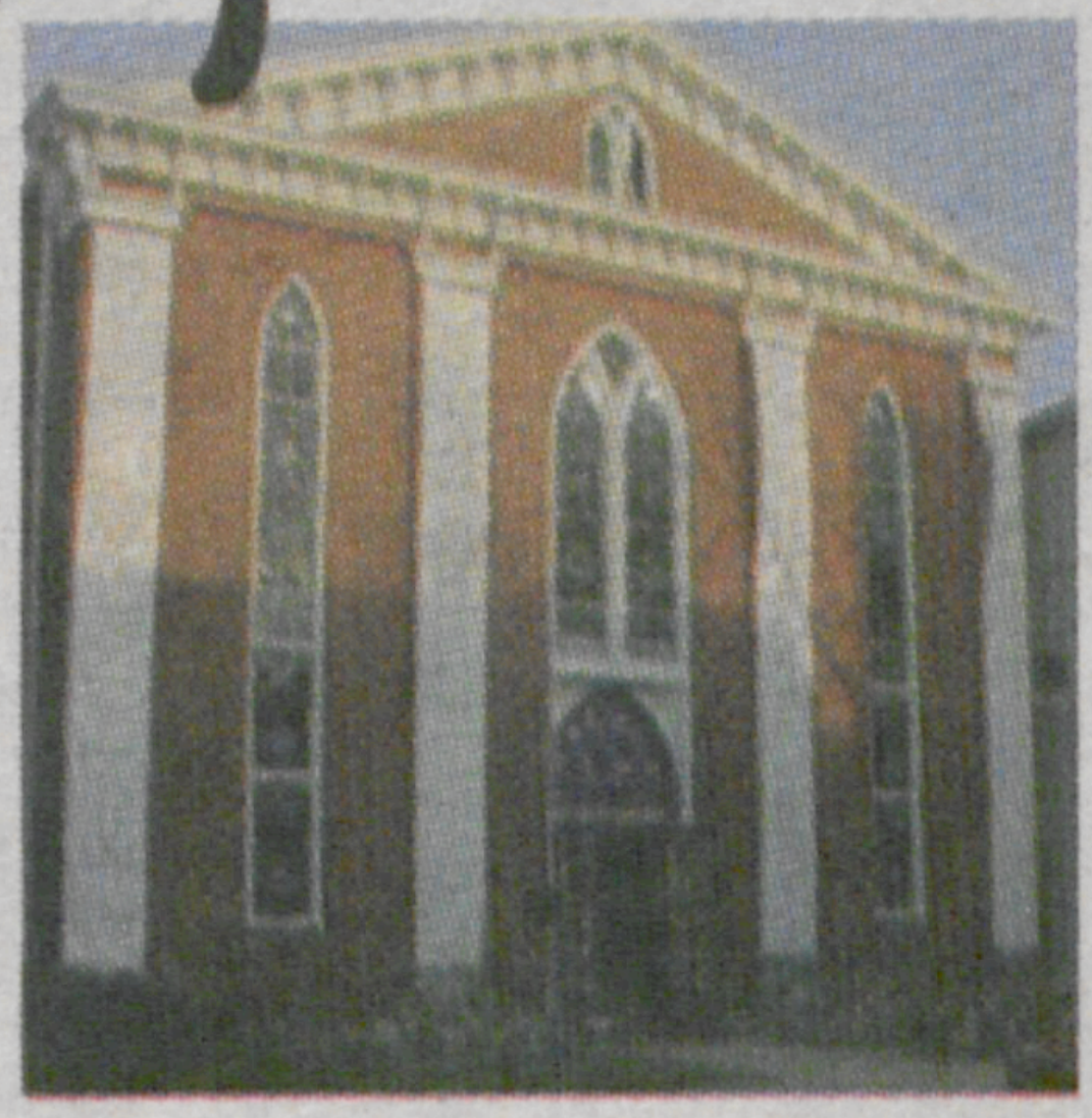

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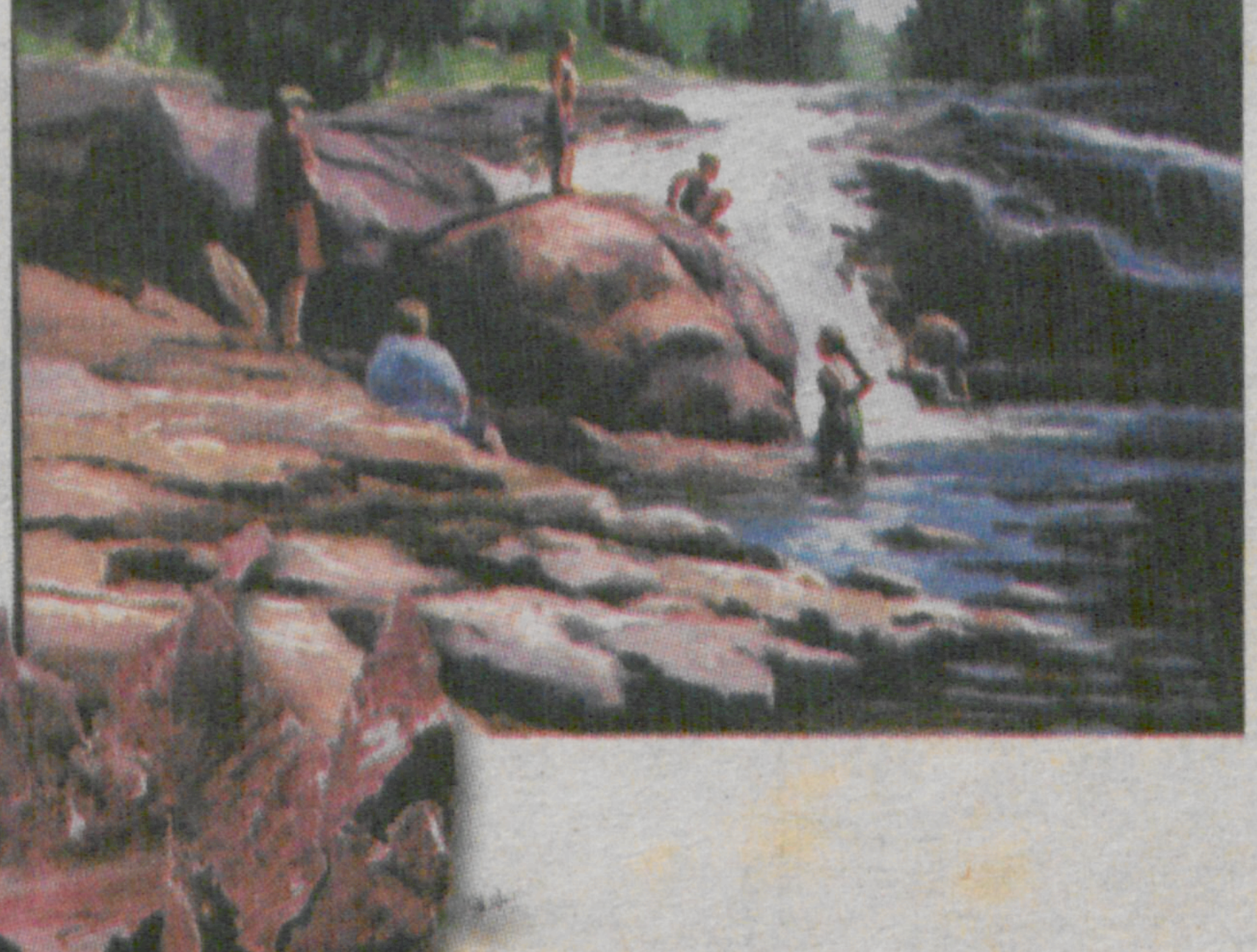

MECHANICSBURG
2nd Floor Gallery • 105 S. Market Street • 697-0502 www2ndFloorGallery.com

SHIPPENSBURG
The SHAPE Gallery • 39 W. King St. • 377-8842 www.shapeart.org

NEW CUMBERLAND
Tickle My Senses • 312 Bridge St. • 774-1168

Now's the Time. [4:10 p.m.]
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